THE WAR, 1915–16

TO

CHARLES DONALD AUSTIN GORING



THE SINKING OF THE HOSPITAL SHIP "ANGLIA"

Nurses assisting the Wounded

THE WAR, 1915-6

A History and an Explanation

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

BY ELIZABETH O'NEILL, M.A.
AUTHOR OF "THE WORLD'S STORY," ETC.



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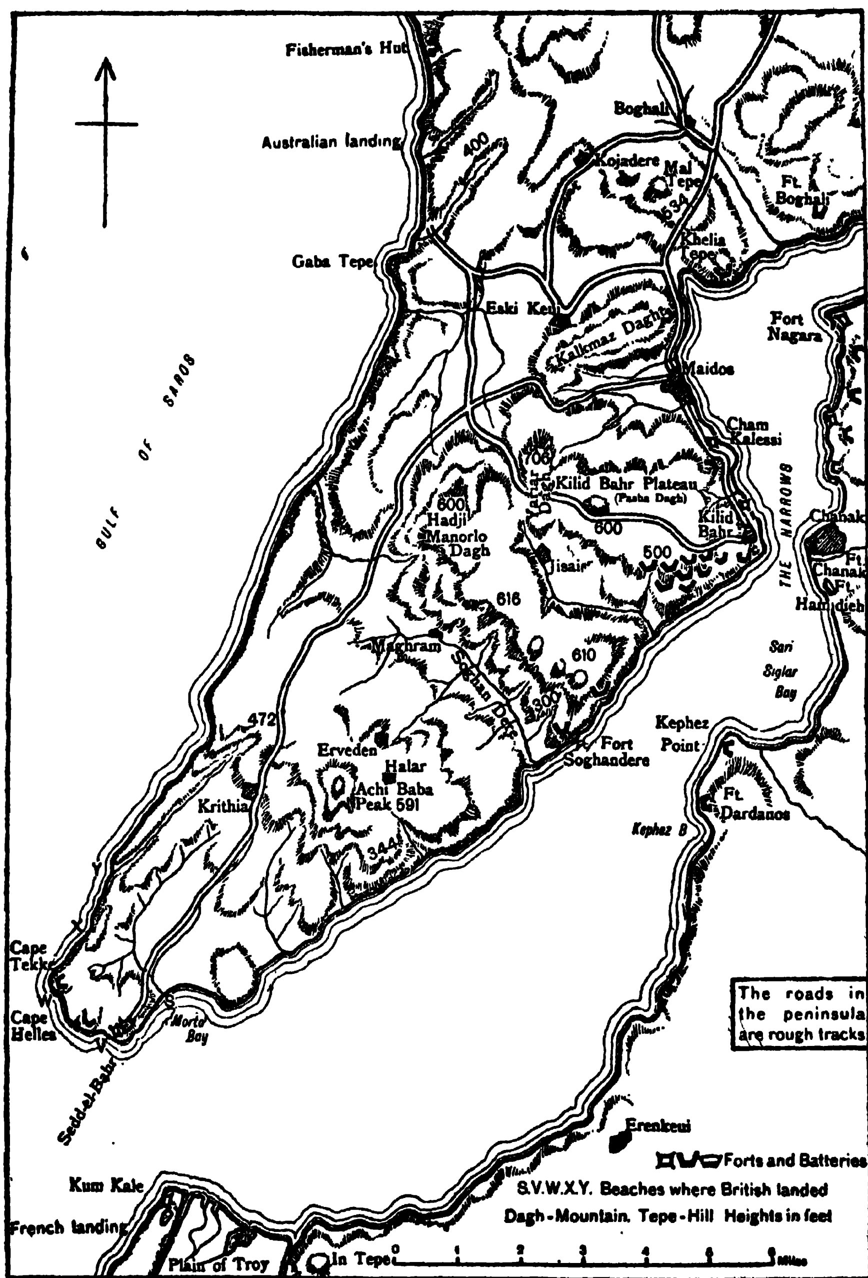
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RUSSIA'S WESTERN FRONTIER



THE SOUTH END OF THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA AND THE DARDANELLES

THE WAR, 1915–16

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT RUSSIAN RETREAT

THE FALL OF WARSAW

EVERYONE remembers how, at the beginning of the war, it seemed that the great armies of Russia might march straight upon Berlin; how they invaded East Prussia and Galicia; and how the Germans drove them back, marching their armies to the very gates of Warsaw. It will be remembered, too, how the Russians in their turn drove the Germans back, the vast battle line rolling onward into German and Austrian territory once more after the first great battle before Warsaw in October 1914; and how, after terrific battles in East Prussia, Poland, and Galicia, in which at Christmas 1914 it seemed that Russia was bound to win, the Germans began, in a series of tremendous attacks, to try to roll the line back again to Warsaw; and how, in the second great battle before Warsaw in February 1915, the Germans were checked once more, and the Russians recovered again. The great fortress of Przemysl, in Galicia, which had been invested for some time, fell to the Russians on the 22nd of March.

Then came another tremendous rally and attack from the Germans in April. Again the Russians fell back, never allowing their line to be broken, fighting brilliant rearguard actions, but never wasting their men, while the Germans sacrificed theirs in great numbers in their desperate attacks. On the morning of the 3rd of June 1915 Przemysl fell once more into

German hands; but it was now of no value as a fortress. The news of its fall was spread all over the world as the story of its capture by Russia had been, but it was no longer of any great use to the enemy.

The fall of Przemysl was only one incident in a third great Russian retreat, in which the Germans were always chasing an enemy whom they could not conquer. In all these retreats they were trying to gain a big victory over the Russians, in which they would either take two or three Russian armies prisoner, or break up the Russian line so thoroughly that it would not be able to form again for a long time. In fact, they hoped for a great victory such as their fathers had won at Sedan or the British at Waterloo. They hoped that Russia might then make peace, and set the German armies from the Eastern front free to attack France; or even if Russia would not make peace, it was hoped that, after a crushing defeat, she could be held back by a much smaller army. But this defeat of the Russians never came. As the German army advanced the Russians drew back, always in good order, and losing fewer men than the Germans themselves. In a war of "attrition" this meant, of course, that the Germans were really bringing themselves nearer to the final defeat. Still, the Russian retreat meant that the fighting would soon be again on Russian soil; and it brought terrible suffering to the Russian Poles.

After Przemysl, the next fortress against which the Germans naturally pressed was Lemberg, the important town on the chief line of railway between Russia and Austria which the Russians had taken from the Austrians in September 1914, and kept ever since. But in this third great retreat of the Russians Lemberg was to fall, as indeed Warsaw was to fall later on.

The capture of Lemberg was much more important to the Russians than the recovery of Przemysl. Besides, being one of the chief towns of Austria-Hungary, it was the centre of a big railway system. Twelve different lines ran from it, and,

of course, a railway centre like this was of the greatest advantage for the rapid movement of troops from one place to another. The evacuation of Przemysl, like the evacuation of Lodz in the winter of 1914, really strengthened the Russian line, because it got rid of a dangerous salient. The Russian line now ran from the east of the river San, behind Przemysl, to the north of Stryj, and then on to the Dniester. The crossing of the Dniester was necessary for any real attack on Lemberg. Far to the east an Austrian force pushed the Russians back from the Pruth to the Dniester, and sent a few skirmishing parties forward into Bessarabia, a province which belongs to Russia, but should naturally belong to Roumania. Germany was anxious to get Roumania to join her, while the Allies hoped she might come in on their side. She, however, has so far remained neutral. It seems a pity that the Russians could not make up their minds to give Bessarabia to Roumania.

Meanwhile the famous German general Mackensen was pushing his forces along the San, and along the Przemysl-Lemberg railway towards Grodek, in the centre of the mass of lake and marshland which cut them off from Lemberg.

The chief crossings of the Dniester at Zurawno were taken by the Germans three days after Przemysl was retaken. Two days later the Russians crossed the river and took the town again. They gave it up later, but held firmly the bridgeheads on the opposite side of the river. In these few days of fierce fighting the Russians took 10,000 prisoners, besides many guns, and even field kitchens, which the Germans left behind when they were pushed back over the river. The Russians published about this time the fact that they had taken between 120,000 and 150,000 prisoners on a forty-mile front. It was the Russians who were retreating, but the Germans who were losing their men.

It was almost hopeless to push the Russians back from the Dniester by a direct attack from the west, but Mackensen planned to make them move back by attacking their position

from the north, where he directed his troops against the railway from Lemberg to Tomaszow. If this line could be cut the Russian retreat would be seriously hampered. But the progress of his force was very slow. After twelve days they had only reached a line running from the town of Lubaczow to the village of Krakowice. This slow advance was very different from the rapid pushing forward from the river Dunajec after the terrible bombardment there in the early part of the previous month. But conditions were now different. The lines of railway on which the Germans had depended so much all during the war were fewer here than in their own and Austrian territory farther west, where many lines had been really made years before for the mere purposes of war. There was no railway to Krakowice, and not even good roads. The Russians had been pushed back in May by means of a tremendous artillery attack on a narrow front. But the Germans could not repeat this trick, for the carrying of heavy guns and great stores of munition requires at least good roads if not railways. The conditions of fighting then became more equal for the two armies as they drew away from the great railway centres.

The Germans could now only push forward slowly, and they lost men at every step. Round Lubaczow the fighting was very fierce. The Russian line bore attack after attack for several days, and when the tired infantry at last gave way the Russian cavalry charged, pushing the German line back, and destroying a whole regiment. So greatly were the Germans taken by surprise that it took them a whole day to get into order again.

Farther south, too, the Germans fought their way across the Dniester, near Stryj, and also at Zurawno, but were thrown back again by a determined counter-attack. At Zurawno 9000 Germans were taken prisoner, and great quantities of munitions and supplies fell into the hands of the Russians. So, by the middle of June, the Germans had not made an immense advance, and they had lost heavily.

But now Mackensen lengthened out his line of offence, attacking at Rawa Ruska, Grodek, and Komarno. The Russians, attacked thus to north and south as well as in front, now gave up the line through Grodek, and drew back before Lemberg. The city must fall now, as there was no line of defence before it; but the stubborn Russian soldiers still fought on, and they sold the town dearly. But the line was ordered back; the troops withdrew in order from the city, and at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 22nd of June the Austrian troops entered Lemberg, after it had been in the hands of the Russians for ten months. Great was the rejoicing in Germany and Austria at the recovery of Lemberg, and the Allies were naturally depressed; but it must be remembered that, so far, the enemy had only been winning back with immense losses territory which the Russians had taken from them in a brilliant advance.

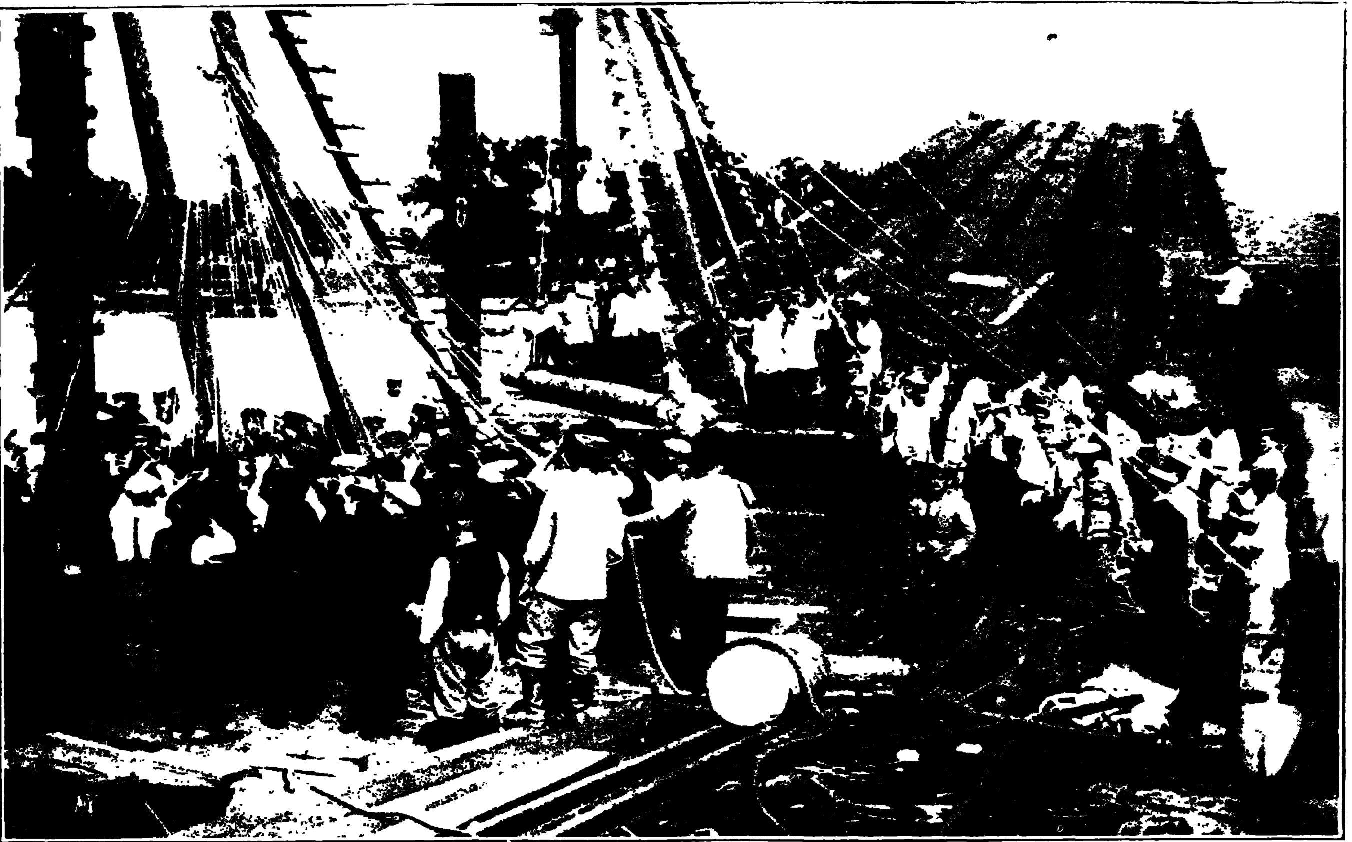
Nearly the whole of Galicia was now won back; but, as the people who understood most about military things pointed out at the time, the Russian army was as strong as ever. The Germans could not beat it. Fine leadership can be shown as well, or even better, in retreat as in attack, and there can be no doubt that the Russian generals were very fine leaders indeed. The Russians make perfect soldiers, and their officers have shown themselves in the Great War the best leaders in Europe. The Germans dared not withdraw troops from the Russian front to send them elsewhere. They knew that if they weakened their armies there the Russians would soon be driving them westward again. The Russians retreated, but they retreated in their own way, and chose their own time. They were never thrown into disorder; they wasted no men, and they left nothing of value behind them for the use of the enemy. A retreat in which the pursuing army has lost at least three-quarters of a million men can hardly be looked upon as a defeat. One advantage the enemy had gained in winning back Galicia. The harvests of Hungary would be reaped by Germany and not by Russia, and in a war of attri-

tion this increase of the food supply of a nation which was really in a state of siege was a real gain.

As the Germans could not safely draw men away from the Russian front, their best plan was to reinforce their armies and push on into Poland. And this is what they did. The German generals were anxious above all things to win one great battle against the Russians. They now planned a new advance against Warsaw. Twice before in the great struggle they had advanced upon Warsaw, and had been driven back. Now they planned to attack it not from the front but from the south-east, which was, in fact, the direction from which it could be best attacked. At this time the Russian line near Warsaw made a big salient; that is to say, it jutted out in a sort of sharp bend from the main Russian line. The town of Plock, on the Vistula, was at the westernmost point of the salient, and Warsaw was at the centre. The German plan was now to make a big attack on the salient by advancing from the south between the rivers Vistula and Bug, while another army should attack the salient from the north across the river Narew. If the two attacks were successful the German armies would meet across the "neck" of the salient, the Russian armies within the salient would be cut off from their line and captured or destroyed, for they would have no means of getting supplies. Warsaw would, of course, be taken. This at last would be the Russian defeat for which Germany had waited so long.

We shall see what really did happen. It was necessary, if the Germans were to succeed in their plan, that their armies should move quickly. If the two German armies did not make haste to meet across the neck of the salient, the Russians would either send reinforcements to the salient, or they would simply draw back in their own clever way, and evacuate the salient.

Meanwhile in Galicia the Russian retreat was going steadily on in the few days after the fall of Lemberg. The Russians fought rearguard actions all the time, and whenever the Germans pressed forward too quickly, hoping to throw the re-



THE GERMANS REPAIRING A GREAT BRIDGE AT WARSAW, WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY THE RUSSIANS BEFORE THEY LEFT THE CITY

treating troops into disorder, they always met with disaster, and lost many men themselves instead, but for some days after the fall of Lemberg the fighting along the Russian front died down to a great extent.

On the 29th of June the German armies began to press northwards towards the Warsaw salient. The advancing line stretched between the town of Tomaszow, which is actually within the borders of Russian Poland, and Bela. By the 1st of July the German armies were advancing northward in two groups, stretching for a hundred miles across the ground between the Vistula and the Bug. The western group of troops, who were chiefly Austrians, were under the command of the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, and the eastern troops, who were Germans, under Mackensen. By this time the line was approaching Lamox, which is twenty-five miles within the borders of Russian Poland. The attack was directed against the Ivangorod-Kiev railway. The German armies were very large, but their advance was hampered by the nature of the ground. There were no railway lines in all the district from Galicia to the line running between Ivangorod and Cholm. This railway is eighty miles long, and yet there are only five roads leading to it. The Germans had not met with such difficulties in the way of carrying up their guns and munitions when they had the finer railways of Galicia to help them. The land over which they were now advancing was cut up by numerous little rivers, and broken by great tracts of swamp and marshland, little hillocks, and forests. The fighting was of the fiercest, and the Germans declared that during May and June they had captured 940 machine guns and 344 guns. If this was so it must have been a great loss to the Russians, for their one weakness was the shortage of munitions and guns ; but they, too, were continually taking numbers of German guns.

On the 1st of July the Germans took Lamox, but after this the advance was stopped for some days.

The Archduke was trying to press forward to Lublin, and Mackensen to Cholm. The Archduke, with his army of

400,000 men, found the Russians stretching across his way as he pressed along the road from Krasnik to Lublin. Here a fierce three days' battle was fought. On the first day 2000 Austrians lay dead, and 2000 prisoners were taken. At the end of the three days the Russians had taken 11,000 prisoners and several machine guns, and the Austrians were in retreat. In the next few days 11,000 more prisoners fell to the Russians. The Austrians had retreated a full two miles before they drew up their line again. Mackensen meanwhile was making very little progress. After a few days, however, the line began to advance once more, and at the same time the attack on the salient from the north began. The river Narew, which joins the Vistula below Warsaw, continues the defensive line of the Vistula with the Bobr up to the Niemen line. Where the Narew joins the Vistula the great fortress of Novo Georgievsk stands, while smaller fortresses are dotted along the line ot the river—namely, Sierok, Pultulok, Rozhan, Ostrolenka, and Lomza. The Narew is the natural defensive line for Warsaw to the north. Meanwhile a front attack upon Warsaw with poisonous gases had been made and driven off.

The attack on the Narew line was made along the valleys of the rivers which run into the Narew from the south-east of East Prussia. There were several attacks, but the chief blow was struck between the rivers Orsyx and Lydnia. Here lies the town of Przasnyz, which had already been taken by the Germans and taken back by the Russians several times. Before the war it had been an unfortified town, but the Russians had now fortified it. The Germans were especially anxious to take Przasnyz, because through it runs the highroad from East Prussia to Mlawa, and along the Lydnia runs the only railway to be found in the district. The Germans wanted, of course, to secure these lines of communication, and they advanced in great numbers. On the 13th of July the Russians fell back to their second line of trenches; on the 15th they evacuated Przasnyz; and four days later they had fallen back across the Narew, and the Germans were laying siege to Ostrolenka.

All this time the Austrians and Germans between the Vistula and the Bug had not made very rapid progress; but Mackensen had won Krasnostaw, about ten miles south of the Ivangorod-Kiev railway, and on the day after Przasnyz fell this line began to advance more rapidly. The Archduke made one violent attack after another, but gained very little ground. Mackensen attacked more cleverly, and the whole line advanced to about twelve miles from the railway.

The Russians, when the attack was made on the Narew, straightened up their line by drawing back from the Bzura and Rawka to a strongly fortified line eighteen miles from Warsaw. If the Germans could have won the line of the Narew and cut across the railway running from Warsaw to Petrograd, they would have been in a position to prevent the Russians evacuating the salient in an orderly manner. But the Narew line was very strong, and had all the advantages of rapid supplies through the railway. The Germans managed to get across the river at various points, but they could not join up into a connected line, and on the 27th of July they were all pushed back again to the northern bank by a Russian counter-offensive.

In other parts of the Russian front the enemy was showing himself more successful. General von Buelow was pressing forward through the Russian province of Courland towards Riga, and to the south Radom was taken by the Austrians, who were pushing the Russian line here back to the Vistula.

Between the Vistula and the Bug the struggle still went on, and on the last day of July the Russians drew back from the line of the railway. The Austrians took Lublin; but the movement had been too slow to prevent the withdrawal of the troops in the salient. Up in Courland, too, von Buelow was held firmly back at the river Dvinsk. It had been hoped that he would take Riga, and so prevent the Russians taking up a firm stand on the river Niemen. Though they had the Ivangorod railway, and had got across the Vistula between Warsaw and Ivangorod, the Germans could not, after all, pre-

vent the orderly withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Warsaw salient. In front of Warsaw they had now fallen back within the outer works of the fortress. Still the Russians held their line on the Narew. So heroically did they resist that the German infantry gave up hope of ever moving them, and had to be driven to the attack by their own cavalry.

On the night of the 4th of August the German field artillery was brought up and turned upon the fortifications of Warsaw. Time after time were the Germans thrown back from the immense entanglements of barbed wire. The roar of the guns shook the city, and the scene was lit up by the flashes of bursting shells. German aeroplanes braved the anti-aircraft fire, and darted hither and thither like great birds of prey. At midnight the outer forts were given up, and the Russian troops withdrew within the city. At three o'clock the bridges across the Vistula were blown up, and at six o'clock the next morning, the 5th of August, Prince Leopold of Bavaria led his troops into the empty city of Warsaw. Since the middle of July, when the Russians knew of the attack from the north, the emptying of the city had been going on. Refugees from the surrounding countryside, fleeing as the Germans advanced, poured in as the people of Warsaw, rich and poor alike, filed out, carrying their most valued possessions with them. The refugees pressed on, too, according to the advice given to them to make their way into the interior of Russia.

Warsaw, once the proud capital of a united Poland, was now an important manufacturing city, with 900,000 inhabitants. Once before, when the Germans thought they were about to take Warsaw, the German Emperor had been ready to enter the city in state for the admiration of the conquered population. He had ridden away disappointed, for Warsaw did not fall. This time he had not attempted to repeat the experiment. He was wise, for there would have been no population to admire him. Moreover, the Russians, in their usual thorough way, had removed everything which could be of any value to the Germans. All metal, and especially things made of copper,



THE TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS OF THE RUSSIAN PEASANTS DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES

so useful for munitions, was removed by the police and soldiers. The treasures from the churches, valued relics, and revered shrines were removed, and sent off with the valuables from banks, post offices, and law courts to places of safety. The consuls representing the Allied Powers left with their papers for Moscow.

The people crowded into the bare churches, weeping and praying. Mines were laid within the city, and the crops in the countryside around as far as Brest were gathered in, or, when this was not possible, burned. Nothing was left for the benefit of the enemy. A great stream of trains and carts and wagons moved east. People willingly saw the treasures they could not carry away destroyed, rather than leave them to the enemy. The water supply was, of course, cut off. And all this time the enemy's armies were attacking on three sides, hoping to destroy the armies which were engaged in this terrible but splendid work.

It is said, and it may well be true, that the Kaiser declared, after the taking of Warsaw: "There will be no decoration for anybody on this occasion. We have paid too dearly for Warsaw. We have captured only the cage; the bird has flown." The fall of Warsaw, though it seemed a romantic and, of course, a tragic event to the Allies, was not really of any great importance, except to the suffering people who went out as wanderers from it. It meant, of course, that the Russians had lost the line of the Vistula, and must take their stand farther back; but it did not mean that the Russians had been defeated. Far from it. All the world was full of admiration, and the Germans must have been full of exasperation, at the masterly way in which the salient had been defended and the retreat made. In all military history few finer things have been done than this clever dealing with the situation. The Russians, badly armed, short of munitions, outnumbered even, had held their own, and calmly kept the enemy at bay until it was safe to allow him to advance. The fact that this weaker army was not forced by the stronger to face it in a great battle

was a victory in itself. It was, perhaps, because the Germans felt so discouraged that there began at this time discussions about conditions of peace which certainly were set going by German statesmen. When these proposals (always to the advantage of Germany) came to nothing, the Germans took up their task once more, always trying to force Russia into a great battle in which she should be defeated.

THE INVASION OF RUSSIA

After the German disappointment at finding Warsaw empty they turned their thoughts to the taking of the great fortress on the Bug—Brest Litovsk. The defensive line running along the Niemen and the Bug was really the first strong line of defence within Russian territory proper. It was much stronger than the Vistula line, and even at the beginning of the war the Russian generals had thought of drawing back from Warsaw and massing their troops on this line. Even after the fall of Warsaw the line along the Narew still held, and none of the fortresses on the Niemen had fallen. The fortresses along the line of the river Kovno, Olita and Grodno, with Osowiec, not on the river, but standing west of Grodno, were very strong, and Brest was a magnificent fortress. But the line itself was not so strong as its fortresses. It had the one weakness that it was not long enough, and the armies defending it might be surprised by a "turning" movement on its flanks. This is what had happened on the line of the Vistula. It was the flank attack through Galicia which had obliged the Russians to draw back from that line. In the same way the Niemen-, Bug line was threatened with a flank attack from Courland, where, at the time that Warsaw fell, von Buelow was pushing with a large body of cavalry across the country between Riga and the Niemen. It was clear that the Germans did not mean to entrench themselves definitely on the Vistula line, for in the south, too, Mackensen still pressed forward.

So the great fortress of Brest was threatened from three

sides by the armies of the enemy. There were the German armies coming from the Narew, the armies of Prince Leopold advancing from Warsaw, and Mackensen's army from the south. But meanwhile the Russian armies lay well in front of Brest, and they retreated from Warsaw as slowly and coolly as they had retreated from Lemberg. The Germans were not able to cross the river below Warsaw for three days after they had taken possession of the city, and Praga, the suburb of Warsaw, on the opposite bank, was not occupied until the 9th. The defence of the Narew line, which did not break until the 16th of August, was a wonderful achievement. It was the task of the troops left here to hold the line as long as possible, to protect the retreat of the main army. Naturally the numbers left behind in this way were not very great; but the men fought like heroes. Already to the south, on the direct line to Brest, Siedlice and, farther south, Lukow were taken by the Germans before the Narew troops drew back. The Germans had lost heavily in their attacks on this line.

The German advance was now being made with all possible haste. The cavalry were sent on ahead to find their own food in a country which could not provide it, for the Russians took or destroyed everything of the sort as they drew back. Fast after the starving cavalry the infantry were pushed on, so rapidly, indeed, that many were quite worn out when the order to attack was given. Many gave themselves up to the Russians for the sake of food or from sheer weariness. Mackensen made very slow progress, and was only saved from a crushing blow by the help of the Austrians on his left. On his right, near the Bug, his losses were very great.

In the north General von Hindenburg was in command of the German armies threatening the fortresses on the Niemen. He was fighting under better conditions than Mackensen, as he had several lines of railway behind him, which brought up abundant supplies. He had a million men and a collection of big Austrian siege guns. The defence of the Niemen fortresses was in the hands of the fine Russian general Alexieff.

So splendidly did he hold the line that Hindenburg grew desperate. The Russians drove off one of the terrible German gas attacks by lighting fires, which, heating the gas, made it rise and pass over their heads without doing much harm.

Hindenburg had such immense guns (mounted on special beds of concrete built for the purpose) that, with patience, he was sure to be able to batter down the forts without losing his men. But he was too impatient and angry when he knew that the Russian army was being withdrawn in its usual orderly fashion, and that the big battle in which he hoped to defeat the Russians was as far off as ever. He then did what the German generals seem always willing to do—flung his infantry line after line at the forts, only to be shot down in hundreds by the guns. Sierok was at last taken, but was recovered again by the Russians at the point of the bayonet. Then, on the 8th of August, Hindenburg decided to throw all his forces against the important fortress of Kovno. Kovno stood in the way of the conquest of Courland. It was important also because it stood on the railway running from East Prussia to Vilna. No advance could be made to Vilna until Kovno had fallen. The fall of Kovno, if it came soon enough, would also give the Germans their last chance of pushing down and striking the retreating Russian armies in the rear. Kovno fell on the 17th of August, but it did not fall in time for this. It was one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, but no fortress could have resisted the shells from the enormous guns which the Germans turned upon it. The only chance of saving these fortresses would have been to throw up great mounds of earth round the fortress, and defend these with men and vast quantities of ammunition. The French had learned from the fall of Namur and Liége, and had saved their great fortress of Verdun in this way; but the Russians had not enough munitions to do this at Kovno.

The town was defended by a circle of eleven forts, and for days the German guns were turned upon these. The firing on one fort was kept up continuously for several days and



FIGHTING BY NIGHT ON THE ROAD TO WARSAW

nights. The German officer in command, impatient like Hindenburg himself, would not wait for the guns to finish their work, but drove on the infantry, only to be shot down as they dashed against the barriers of barbed wire, or blown to pieces as the land mines which the Russians had prepared exploded. By these wasteful means Kovno was taken at last; but military critics said that 100,000 lives had been wasted which could have been saved if the German commander had reserved his infantry attacks until the guns had done their work.

There was great joy in Berlin, for people did not think of the price that had been paid, or remember that the throwing away of 100,000 men in a war of attrition could hardly be called a victory. The fall of Kovno was, however, a real blow to the Russians, for they had meant to hold the line of the Niemen and the Bug. Once Kovno fell it would be very difficult to hold the line; and the fighting was now brought into Russia proper. The other fortresses were bound to fall too, and within a week, amidst the most terrible scenes of bloodshed and fury, the Germans took Novo Georgievsk, Bielsk, Osowiec, Kovel, and Brest.

The siege of Novo Georgievsk, the great fortress on the Narew which was still holding out, was, perhaps, even more terrible than that of Kovno. While it stood it was difficult for the Germans to get supplies along the river to the armies advancing east. For this reason, and because the Germans would have to leave a large number of troops behind to besiege it, the Russians thought it well worth their while to leave a garrison in the fortress while they withdrew east. In the case of Kovno the garrison had kept in touch with the armies, and had been able to withdraw, so that the Germans got neither garrison nor guns there (for the guns had been battered out of shape by the terrible bombardment before the fortress fell). But in Novo Georgievsk the Russians left 25,000 men—a small enough garrison to hold it against the army of 200,000 men which was sent against it.

Novo Georgievsk was actually surrounded, as the Germans

had now come down between it and the retreating Russians. For nine days the small garrison defended the outer and stronger ring of forts against the desperate attack, and then drew back to the inner ring of weaker fortresses. They had stood to their machine guns in the most wonderful way, mowing down the Germans in heaps as attack followed attack by the densely packed infantry. The heroic Russian gunners stood at their guns till many fainted with fatigue. And the Germans did their part too. It was said that they had been drugged with wine to encourage them in the mad attacks, and it is certain that many advanced to the very mouths of the guns, sinking down at last too weary to care whether they were shot or not. The defenders had but a small store of ammunition left to defend the inner forts. The great guns were brought nearer, and the forts fell within two days. Even then the little garrison would not give in, but fought at last hand to hand. The siege of Novo Georgievsk had kept the Germans back for a fortnight, and had cost them a vast number of men and munitions. Still, they were now definitely sure of taking the great defensive line of the Niemen and the Bug, and the way was cleared for the sending forward of supplies for the siege of the great Bug fortress, Brest Litovsk.

The Germans had been disappointed in their hopes of surrounding the Russian armies in the Warsaw salient. They now hoped to bring them to battle at Brest, for behind Brest lay the great Pripet marshes. The Russians could not fall back through these, and must, therefore, split up their line if they fell back from Brest at all. The Germans probably thought that, rather than do this, the Russians would face them in a big battle, and they hoped that this would result in the great defeat of the Russian armies to which they had been looking forward for so long. The German advance to Brest was very slow. The Russians took their own time over the retreat, and the Germans lost men all the way.

Everyone thought that the Russians were preparing for a gigantic struggle before Brest; but the Grand Duke Nicholas

and the Russian General Staff had really decided not to do this. They withdrew most of the guns, leaving just a few and a small garrison to hold the fortress and delay the German advance. From the north and north-east the German attack was becoming very strong. General Alexieff had decided to withdraw his northern armies along the very line by which the Germans and Austrians were hoping to take him in flank. In this direction, he could also keep open the line of retreat to Pinsk for the armies at Brest. On the 25th of August the fighting along the whole Russian front suddenly became fiercer. From the north of Brest to the Upper Narew General Alexieff's line gave battle to the armies of Prince Leopold and General Worysch, and to part of Mackensen's army and to Gallwitz's force to the north. He beat off the attacks of all in a masterly way, and secured the safe withdrawal of his armies towards Minsk.

At Brest the garrison held their own against the tremendous odds splendidly. The fortress did not fall until evening, and the small garrison had done deadly work against the advancing infantry. As darkness came on the Russian army at Brest drew off safely to Pinsk, where the garrison was able to join them. The Germans entered Brest, to find it a mere shell of a fortress with a few hopelessly battered guns. The Russians had destroyed the bridge, and even set fire to the market-place. Once more the Germans had been disappointed, and found themselves bound to press on farther into Russia if they were ever to destroy the Russian armies, as they still hoped to do.

The next advance would be against the fortresses of Vilna and Grodno. At this time, a few days after the taking of Brest, the Germans began to advance in Galicia again. The whole of Galicia was not yet cleared, but the chief reason for the advance was the German desire to seize Lyck and Rovno. From Rovno runs the chief line of railway across the Pripet marshes. General Ivanoff's armies south of the marshes had not lost touch with the main Russian army, but the Germans hoped to cut him off by the seizure of this railway. It was also advisable for the German line in Galicia

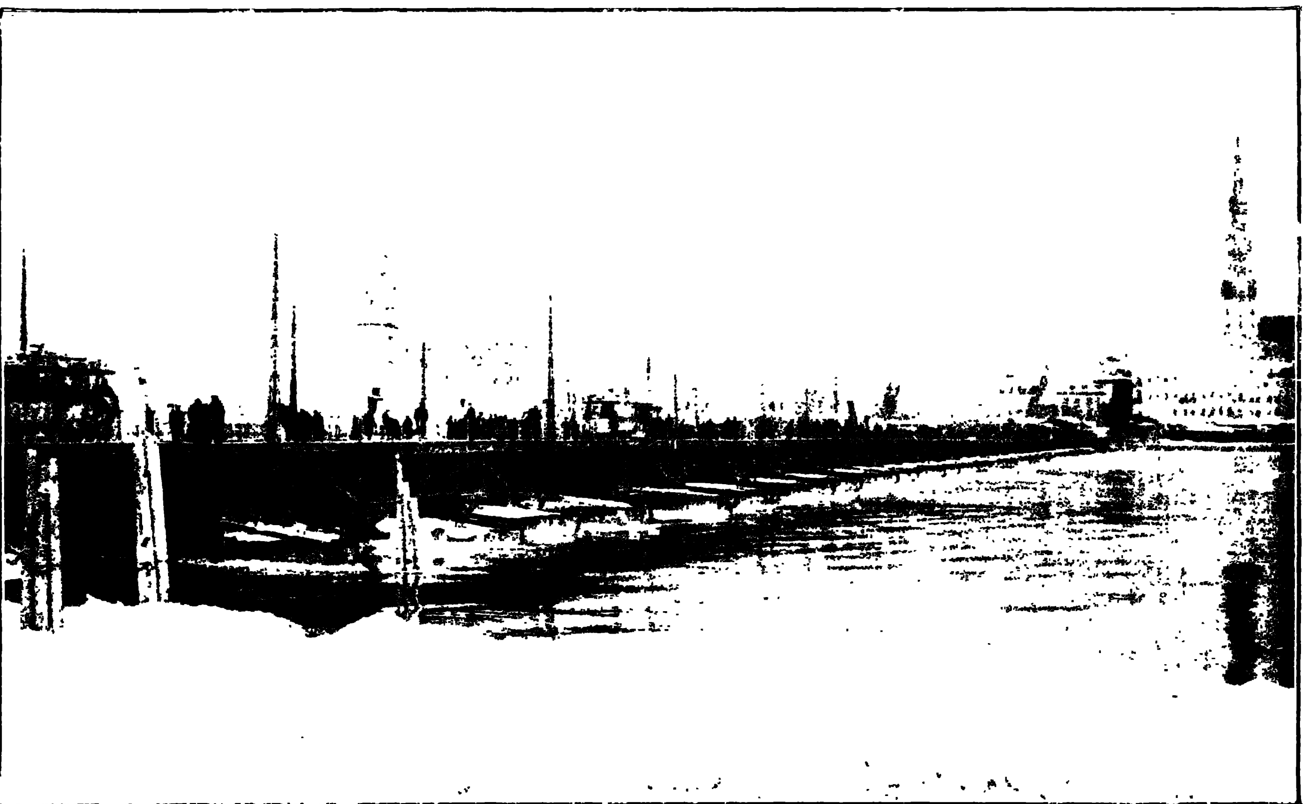
to advance so as to keep in line with the armies advancing farther north. The German line at the beginning of September ran from the coast a few miles west of Riga, curving east and then south-west, a few miles to the east of Kovno, running well to the west of Grodno through Brest into Galicia. General Hindenburg was still in command against the northern part of the Russian line, which was under General Ruszky, under whose command the Russians had overrun Galicia in the first part of the war. General Alexieff was made the new Chief of the General Staff, and General Alexis Evert succeeded him in command of the central Russian armies. The Grand Duke Nicholas, under whose command the Russian armies had fought so brilliantly against Germany, was now removed to take command of the Russian armies fighting the Turks in the Caucasus, and the Tsar himself became Generalissimo, or Commander-in-Chief, of the Russian armies.

There was violent fighting all along the line from Riga to Galicia at the end of August. The attacks on the Dwina front and towards Dvinsk were held back. For months Hindenburg was to try to press forward here, only to be steadily held in check by General Ruszky.

Lower down the line the Germans met with more success, taking Grodno on the 2nd of September. But although they had withdrawn from Grodno, the Russian troops were ordered back into the city on the following day. By this remarkable action and their fine fighting, they drew off the attention of the Germans from the Russian troops in the neighbourhood, who had found themselves in difficulties, but were now relieved, and retreated in an orderly fashion. In this wonderful dash the Russians took eight machine guns and 150 prisoners from the city they had abandoned the day before.

But gradually the Russian line was pushed back towards Vilna. Here the fighting became extremely fierce, for the Russians held Vilna with the greatest determination, in order to protect the line to the south retreating from Grodno.

Meanwhile, in the south, General Ivanoff was holding back



RIGA IN WINTER. THE FLOATING BRIDGE OVER THE DWINA

the German advance in Galicia in the most brilliant manner. There was the fiercest fighting along the Strypa, and in the first half of September 40,000 German prisoners were taken in this district.

The German attack in the Vilna district was as vigorous as the Russian defence. Here the Germans made their last great attempt to encircle the Russian armies. They came nearer success than they had ever done before, but the Russians fought their way out, and continued the masterly retreat, which must have driven the Germans to despair. It was with the hope of cutting off the armies on the Vilna line that the Germans sent great numbers of troops to advance on the railway line between Vilna and Dvinsk. This line runs from Dvinsk straight to Petrograd, and is, therefore, of the greatest importance. On the 13th of September the Germans cut across the railway line by the capture of Sventsiany. Two days later they crossed the Wilia, north-east of Vilna. The Russian line at Vilna now made a dangerous salient, and the German armies stretched definitely down a line to the east between the Russians and their line of retreat. The Russian armies from Dvinsk to Vilna were, in fact, surrounded; the prize seemed at last in German hands. But the splendid Russian strategy showed itself once more, and the Russian armies were saved from the dangerous position. The German cavalry was already stationed on the railway line at Molodeczna, due east of Vilna, while the Germans advancing from Grodno were attacking Lida, preparing to cut off the retreat from Vilna in this direction. On the 18th of September Vilna fell. The evacuation had begun on the day that Grodno was taken. On the 18th, too, the armies of Leopold of Bavaria, pressing forward on the Russian centre, were driven back at Slonin. The Russian armies fought their way fiercely to break the German line cutting off their retreat east of Vilna. On the 21st of September the Germans were driven from Smorgon, between Vilna and Molodeczna; and two days later the Russians won a success a little to the north-east at Vileika, where they took eight guns. Near Pinsk the

Germans were driven back across the Oginski canal. General Ivanoff, by his brilliant counter-attacks in the south, forced the Germans to send reinforcements there. The line of the Russian retreat was saved, and the last hope of a great defeat of the Russian armies gone. The next great effort of the German armies had to be made in the West, where already the great autumn offensive had been begun by the Allies.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT OFFENSIVE IN THE WEST

THE FIGHTING IN CHAMPAGNE

ONE thing which made the Great War of 1914–15 quite different from any earlier war was the way in which, instead of quick and big battles, in which the armies moved rapidly over big spaces, and victory or defeat was decided often in a few days, the opposing armies now really laid siege to each other. Especially was this so in the West, where the five-hundred-mile-long line of the German armies was being practically besieged for months, and where both armies were entrenched in what had become really underground cities, with mile upon mile of trenches and "dug-outs," of sand-bag and wire protection, with foundations for guns so strong that it seemed they were to last for ever. The German defences were especially strong, for they knew that their only hope now of putting off defeat was to remain on their enemy's land as long as possible, while French and British men and munitions should be spent on besieging them.

Munitions were just as important as men, for shells of the greatest size and of the highest explosive power were required to batter down the iron and concrete shelters which the Germans had set up. The only hope to break the German line or push it back was in a tremendous series of attacks, in which terrific bombardment by artillery should be followed up by infantry attacks. This was the big "offensive" in the West which people were always expecting. Such an offensive had been attempted in the spring of 1915; but it had not been possible to go on with

it very long, because there were never enough munitions either in France or Great Britain. No one had ever imagined before the Great War broke out that such immense quantities of shot and shell would be used, for in all history there had never been such bombardments as in the battles of that war. All through the summer of 1915 great quantities of munitions were being prepared. In Great Britain numbers of men and women gave up other work to help in the great work of munition-making, which was really as important as fighting. People even who were engaged in other work gave up their spare time to help in this national service. Many people thought that great quantities would be got together for an immense offensive in the spring of 1916, but General Joffre decided to commence a new offensive in the autumn of 1915.

The great offensive really began in July, when the Allied aeroplanes were told to bombard certain important positions on the enemy line. By this time great numbers of aircraft had come to be used on both sides. They did the work of reconnaissance, or spying out, which they had done at first, but there were also many more actual fights in the air by this time, and frequent expeditions to bombard important points in the enemy defences. In July squadrons of aeroplanes were sent to bombard the railway junctions and places where food was stored for the army of the Crown Prince in the Argonne.

In August a great bombardment by artillery began along the whole front from Belgium to Lorraine. For weeks this went on day and night. The effect which this terrible shelling had on the German soldiers was plainly shown in letters found upon the killed and wounded taken up by the Allies. "We have been through bitter hours; it seemed as though the world had crumbled to pieces." Letter after letter speaks of the "rain of shells," and some describe how these great things, "as big as pillar boxes," were hurled through the air, killing and wounding great numbers as they fell.

General Joffre arranged that the bombardment should go on along the whole line, so that the Germans should not



A GERMAN OBSERVATION POST IN A BARN ON THE WESTERN FRONT

(Finding out the Places on a Map)

guess at what point the great infantry attacks which were to follow the bombardment would be made. If they had known the real point of attack, they would, of course, have moved troops from other parts of the line to those special places. Preparations and small attacks were made to deceive the enemy in quite different parts of the line from those on which the chief attacks were to be made. Away in Alsace General Dubail made some movements which might lead the Germans to believe that he was going to attempt to descend from the Vosges to the banks of the Rhine. On the extreme left, too, where the Allied line touched the coast in Flanders, monitors were sent by Vice-Admiral Bacon to bombard Knocke, Heyst, Zeebrugge, and Blankenberghe, and the fortresses to the west of Ostend. From this the Germans were led to think that British troops were perhaps going to be landed on the Belgian coast to attack the German line in the rear.

Only on the last three days of the bombardment did the shells fall thickest and fastest upon the German lines in Champagne. It was too late then to make any very special preparations, though the Germans now knew that this was the part of the line where the infantry attacks would be made.

The offensives of the autumn of 1914 and the spring of 1915 had been on much smaller fronts. General Joffre had broken through the German line several times already, but always on so small a front that the Germans were able to bring up reinforcements from the sides, and form a new line a little farther back. But now the offensive was to be made on a much wider front, and it was hoped that if the French broke through the whole German line might be rolled back. The part of the German line selected for the new attack lay along a length of fifteen and a half miles, opposite to the 4th French Army, which had its left flank about fifteen miles east of Rheims. The German line here, as everywhere, was furnished with splendid defences. The ground was marked out into squares and oblongs of almost equal size, in each of which were a number of machine guns, each square being, as

it were, a little fortress in itself. There were two great groups of trenches, about two miles apart. Across these two miles great hedges of barbed wire were stretched.

On the 22nd of September, after five weeks' bombardment all along the front, the special bombardment of this part of the line began. On the evening of the 24th the men who were to make the great attack next day were supplied with an extra ration of wine, and a special address from General Joffre encouraging them in their task was given to them. "The hour has come to attack and to conquer," it said, "to add new pages of glory to those of the Marne, of Flanders, the Vosges, and Arras. . . . On, then, with all your heart for the deliverance of our country and the triumph of right and liberty."

The French soldiers, looking splendid in their blue uniforms and steel casques, were only too glad to burst forth from the trenches, where they had waited so many months, when the order came at last to attack. So splendidly had the artillery done its work that nearly all along the line the front trenches were seized and occupied by the French before midday. Only here and there, where a group of machine guns had remained by chance untouched by the bombardment, or at places where the barbed wire defences had also escaped, was the advance held back. Here the fighting was very hard, the French being engaged, as it were, in a number of sieges. One gain of ground, the wooded land between Souain and Perthes, was particularly pleasing to the French, for they had tried hard to win it in the spring. Now the Germans seemed quite taken by surprise in some places, and north of Perthes some officers were actually taken prisoner in their beds. In this advance directly north of Perthes fifteen guns were taken, while in the woods east of the road from Souain to Perthes one regiment made the immense advance of two and a half miles in two hours, taking twelve guns on the way. Yet sometimes a machine gun, carefully hidden in a clump of woodland and covered with an armoured shield, would pour a deadly fire into the

advancing troops. Sometimes artillery had to be brought up specially to destroy these danger spots. But the advance in the Perthes section of the line was well made, and by evening the troops here had dug themselves well in on the sides of Hill 193 and the Tahure Ridge.

In the part of the line near Mesnil there was very hard fighting too, but not so much success, for the Germans in "Kitchen Gully" maintained their positions, though their line to the east of this was captured by the French. The line between Auberive and Souain also made a good advance in the centre, though the enemy kept their position at each end of this part of the line.

To the right of Perthes the line round Beauséjour made a brilliant advance, sweeping without stopping up the side of the hill called the *Maisons de Champagne.* So swift was their advance that neither guns nor gunners could be drawn back by the Germans, and the men were bayoneted at their guns. It gave the French soldiers immense pleasure to feel that they were winning back great tracts of their own land, which had now been in German hands for more than a year since that first great march of the Germans, which had only been turned back at the Battle of the Marne. Gun carriages advanced at the gallop over the ground where the enemy's trenches had been for so many months, but which was now broken up with mines and shells, and looked like the crater of a dead volcano. Bodies of cavalry, too—a part of the army which had had very little chance of fighting since the first few weeks of the war, when it had been used to protect the infantry during the "Great Retreat"—were now looking forward to receive their orders to charge the retreating Germans when the line should be broken. Unfortunately, this time never came; but the cavalry gave good help, all the same. At one point a body of hussars came under the fire of machine guns in a part of the line where the Germans were holding out stubbornly against the attacks of the French infantry. Many of the hussars had their horses killed under them, but the men rushed with their sabres to

join the infantry; and so the German position was won, 600 giving themselves up as prisoners.

Before the extreme right of the attacking army lay the plateau of Massiges, which had been fortified in the strongest way by a great number of machine guns. Yet the brave Colonial troops, the dark-skinned men of North Africa and Senegal, who had fought in the French army since the war began, managed to get a footing on the plateau in less than a quarter of an hour. They could not advance very far in face of the tremendous fire from the machine guns, but they kept the enemy occupied, and prevented them from turning their fire on to other parts of the line. At the end of the day's fighting the French had made a big advance along the line, fifteen and a half miles long, against which the attack had been made. At some places they had advanced about five-eighths of a mile, but in others they had pushed forward over a distance of two and a half miles. Over 12,000 German prisoners had been taken.

So surprised had the Germans been that they did not make any counter-attack during the night, and the French were able to dig themselves in, rest, and prepare for the next day's attack. During the next few days the offensive was pushed forward all along the line. The French attacked with the same ardour and courage, but the Germans resisted better. The second line of German defences lying over the crest of the hills could not be mapped out as the first line had been. The French General Staff had had complete plans of the first line of defence, and knew where every trench and almost where every gun was. But it was quite different with the second line. Reconnaissance from the air was the only way of getting information about it. The airmen had to fly farther, and the guns and other defences were cleverly hidden from them on the wooded slopes of the hill.

So strong was this second line of defences that the French did not, after all, break through. There were positions like the *Main de Messiges*, naturally so strong and so defended that



Drawn by S. Begg

BRITISH TERRITORIALS, WEARING ANTI-GAS MASKS, CHARGING THE GERMAN TRENCHES AT LOOS

the Germans boasted that it could be held by "two washer-women with two machine guns." The three hills which form the *Main*, or hand, stretch out like three great fingers to the south-west, and the Colonial troops had got on to the plateau, not by advancing up the valleys between, but by going as it were over the back of the hand. They were on the plateau on the first day of the attack, but they only took the position by the hardest and closest fighting. Grenadiers with hand-grenades went with the bayoneting parties, and fought their way in a hand-to-hand fight from trench to trench, helped always by artillery attacks before they advanced. For five days the fight went on, and the Germans were as stubborn in resistance as the French were fierce in attack. The trenches were full of German dead, and yet great numbers were glad to give themselves up as prisoners.

In such fighting as this did the French push forward, making strong the positions they had won, and sometimes winning points in the German second line. On the 30th of September the French official *communiqué* announced that in killed, wounded, and prisoners the Germans had lost more than three army corps, or about 120,000 men. On the 1st of October King George sent a telegram of congratulation to the French President on the courage of the French troops in this great offensive. President Poincaré, too, sent a letter of congratulation to M. Millerand, the French War Minister, asking him to send his congratulations to the officers and men of the French army, praising them for the proofs they had given of "their unrivalled zeal, their spirit of sacrifice, and their sublime devotion to France."

In the fighting in Champagne the splendid spirit of the French soldiers had indeed shown itself, and it was but the reflection of the spirit of France determined to defeat the enemy whatever might be the cost. It seemed in that fighting that every Frenchman was a hero. Men who lay dying in the trenches begged their comrades not to waste time by helping them, or even by stepping aside to avoid their bodies.

The last words of many an officer and soldier were that they were content to die for France. "*En avant! Vive la France!*" "*En avant! One dies but once!*" "*En avant! Leave me to die.*" "*I am happy, for we have won.*" Such were the speeches which the French soldiers heard from their dying officers and comrades, and treasured up to console those who mourned them at home. Officers' servants were found close to their officers, killed by the same bullet. The officers who lived to tell the tale spoke always of the courage of the men; the men spoke always of the kindness and self-sacrifice of their officers. The fighting in Champagne, with all its tales of horror—of the slaughter of men in hundreds and the wounding of men in their thousands—shows the Frenchman at his best, brave, patient, always intelligent and full of patriotism, forgetting himself because carried away by some great idea of duty or self-sacrifice. The great offensive in Champagne achieved much, if not all that was at first expected; but its story will be told in history chiefly for the sake of the sublime heroism of the soldiers of France.

THE BATTLE OF LOOS

While the great offensive was being pushed forward in Champagne, it was also being pushed higher up the line, where the British troops now held a line greater in length than any they had held since the beginning of the war. Immense reinforcements in men and munitions had come out from England, and while Frenchmen were fighting at Perthes, Mesnil, and Messiges, the largest army Britain has produced in all her history was proving itself worthy of the best traditions of British warfare in the great Battle of Loos. The Battle of Loos was only one incident in the general offensive, but it naturally attracted the attention of the people of Great Britain even more than the fighting in Champagne.

Up here to the left of the long Allied line the British and French were to join in an attack which, though it did not

stretch across such a long front as the attack in Champagne, was still very important. In Champagne, between Rheims and the Argonne General Castelnau was trying to win his way to the banks of the Aisne. Here to the north Sir John French and General Foch were trying to push their troops forward into the plain of the river Scheldt.

As reinforcements had come out from England, the British part of the line had grown longer. It now occupied the trenches formerly held by the French as far down as Grenay, opposite Loos and the important railway centre Lens. The trenches here ran north and south from the canal between Bethune and La Bassée to the ridge and plateau called *Notre Dame de Lorette*. During the last few days of the great September bombardment "feints" or "pretending" attacks to deceive the Germans were made in different parts of the British line, at Ypres, Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, and Givenchy. The real attack was to be made towards Lens, the capture of which would have been an immense advantage to the Allies. This offensive in Artois was really a taking up again of the great fight in this district in May and June 1915, when the French had won back the plateau of Notre Dame de Lorette, and had almost won Souchez, when they were driven back by the enemy's poisonous gas. The German line now ran along the eastern slopes of this plateau, in front of a low ridge of hills running from the Bethune-La Bassée Canal through Loos, Hulluch, and Haisnes to Angres and Liévin. The winning of this ridge by the British would mean the winning of Lens. South of Souchez the German line occupied the heights of Vimy. Here they were faced no longer by the British but by the French, and Lens could be equally well secured if the French were able to take those heights.

The British attack on Loos and the French attack on Vimy were part of one plan, and could only be really successful if the two armies advanced fairly equally over the ground. Otherwise the British right or the French left would be left unprotected against a flank attack from the Germans. This is what

actually happened. The British were able to make better progress than the French; but for this reason their right flank was exposed to the terrible German fire, and it was partly through this that the great Battle of Loos, in spite of the splendid fighting of the soldiers, did not result in a real victory. The ridge which the French had to attack to the east of Souchez was fortified in such a way that an unusually long bombardment was required to break down its defences, and so the French advanced more slowly.

The ground over which the British attack was to be pushed, though it was not so high, was terribly broken up. It is a mining district, and dotted over with mining villages, factories, pits, and slag-heaps, between which the trenches ran in the most irregular fashion. It was already tunnelled and cut up long before the Germans had set their heel upon it; but now it was a mass of tunnels and caves, with great heaps of earth and stones spread everywhere. Just opposite Grenay, to the west of Loos, were two enormous slag-heaps, called the *Double Crassier*. Nearer Loos itself the cemetery and chalk-pits had been fortified in the Germans' strongest manner. Between Loos and Lens lay the famous *Hill* 70, where some of the fiercest fighting in the battle took place. To the north lay Hulluch and Haisnes, and in front of Haisnes Pit 8 and the strongly fortified position known as the *Hohenzollern Redoubt*. Loos itself was a mining village, but only a few women and children remained out of its 12,000 inhabitants. The Germans had built there a great erection of steel, consisting of two great towers joined by girders, which gave it the appearance of a bridge. It was really an observation post, from which the Germans could make reconnaissance for miles around. The soldiers called it "Tower Bridge."

The German trenches were sometimes as near as 100 yards to the British, and at no point farther than 500 yards away. There were three lines of German trenches—the first running a good distance west of Loos, the second running in front of it for part of its length and then through it, while behind



FRENCH TROOPS ATTACKING WITH HAND-GRENADES

the village was a third supporting line. The German "dug-outs" were really like houses. They were dug to a depth of from 15 to 30 feet, lined with wood, and supplied with electric light, tables, chairs, and beds. So much had the trenches become a sort of new home to the men that they often decorated the walls of their "dug-outs" with pictures. Dotted about were many observation posts made of concrete, and protected from shot and shell by steel caps.

The day fixed for the infantry advance towards Loos was the 25th of September, the day on which the great advance in Champagne began. In this attack the British were to use gas—not poisonous gas, which caused terrible agony and death, such as the Germans had used, but a gas which would at least make those who breathed it unconscious. On the 24th of September the wind was from the west, and if this wind kept up it would be safe to allow the gas to escape. If the wind had been from the east the gas would, of course, have been blown back, and stupefied the British themselves.

At half-past four on the morning of the 25th of September the most tremendous bombardment ever made by the British army began. An officer wrote of it: "The bombardment was the biggest thing as yet in this war. I wish I could give you some idea of the awful majesty of those few moments, when, as an avenging angel with a flaming sword, the forces of the Allies gave to the Hun the first lash of the scourge prepared for him. The morning, it seemed, was dull (as a matter of fact I found out afterwards, through discovering myself wet through, it was raining heavily); but the flashes of the guns were so continuous as to give a light which was almost unbroken. It flickered, but it never failed. The earth itself quivered and shook with the repeated shocks of the guns. The air was a tattered, hunted thing, torn wisps of it blown hither and thither by the monstrous explosions. We had guns everywhere, and all were firing their hardest at carefully registered points of the German trenches. On every yard of trench at least four shells must have fallen within five minutes, and

each shell would have a radius of destruction of at least twenty yards."

At half-past five quantities of gas were set free, and were blown towards the enemy. Unfortunately the wind was not quite in the west, and a great part of the gas was blown over too far to affect the Germans at Pit 8, the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and Hulluch. At half-past six the signal for which the men had been patiently waiting was given. The furious bombardment ceased; only far to the right the sound of the French guns was heard. In the sudden silence the men, all wearing their gas helmets, burst from the trenches. With one swift forward rush they were on the first German trenches. The Germans fought madly, but the determined attack after the terrible bombardment was too much for them, and the first line was carried amidst terrible scenes of slaughter.

The fighting was particularly hard on the British left, where the gas had had very little effect. The troops here were the 1st Corps, under Lieutenant-General Hubert Gough. After the most terrific fighting Pit 8 was taken, and the British had seized the Hohenzollern Redoubt, though the Germans had not been driven altogether from it. So horrible were the scenes in the fighting here that men came out of the battle almost mad with horror. It was told how one German officer's hair turned grey in these few hours of horror. The 8th Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders took Haisnes after a terrible advance across open ground under a rain of shells and constant rifle fire. They had to hack their way through three lines of wire with a deadly fire from machine guns full upon them. Many fell killed and wounded, but the others would not turn back. Captain Adamson led the remains of the battalion into Haisnes at eight o'clock in the morning.

The 1st Corps had done splendidly; but they had gained these positions from the canal to Haisnes only by the hardest fighting, and had lost many men. Reinforcements should have been hurried up, but they were long in coming. For hours the Highlanders held their position in Haisnes against con-

stant attacks and until they were nearly surrounded. At five o'clock in the afternoon Captain Adamson saw that it was no use standing longer, and drew his men back in good order from the position they had won by so much heroism. At other places, too, the British had to fall back.

The delay in bringing up the reserves was even more regrettable, because with their help Sir Henry Rawlinson, commanding the 4th Corps, could certainly have taken Lens, and the victory for which the Artois offensive was made would have been won.

These troops under Sir Henry Rawlinson had had better luck than the 1st Corps, for the Germans opposite their part of the line had been affected by the gas. The British charged again and again, winning ground with every charge. By half-past six they had pushed their way to the Double Crassier. There was the fiercest fighting near Hulluch. At one point the 15th Division, a body of Highland troops, had their left exposed because the division to the left of them was held up by one of those terrible wire entanglements which occasionally escape destruction even during the most thorough bombardment. Yet they dashed forward to seize the redoubt between Vermelles and Loos. Then the right brigade rushed on to attack Loos from the north, while the left seized two pits, the Chalk Pit and Pit 8, and gained possession of Hill 70.

Before this great charge was made a fine deed was performed by Piper Daniel Laidlaw. He saw that the company of the 7th King's Own Scottish Borderers to which he belonged, and which had been to some extent overcome by the enemy's gas, were hesitating to leave their trenches. Climbing up out of his trench, he coolly marched up and down the parapet playing the pipes which Scots love so much. He fell wounded at last ; but the men were out of the trenches by that time and advancing to the charge. Piper Laidlaw afterwards received the Victoria Cross for this brave conduct.

Loos was taken after a fierce struggle. Two brigades of

the London Territorials stormed it from its cemetery, where fierce fighting went on among the tombs. They then forced their way into the town from south and west, while the Highlanders attacked it from north and east. In the town terrible fighting took place from house to house as the Germans were driven out at the point of the bayonet. When Loos was at last taken there was found among the few inhabitants a French girl of eighteen, named Emilienne Moreau. She had not been frightened in the least, and when she saw Germans attacking wounded Highlanders and Territorials, she killed them by firing a revolver and throwing grenades, which she picked up. Most women would have had very little nerve left after such terrible scenes; but when all was over this mere girl set calmly to work to help to bind up wounds and tend the sick. Two months later General de Sailly pinned on her breast the *Croix de Guerre*, saying: " You do honour to the women of France."

Not only were the reserves too long in coming up, but the French to the right did not work with the British. Their bombardment lasted longer (the ground opposite to them being defended in a particularly thorough manner), and when they did attack, some minutes after midday, they charged towards Souchez and Vimy, not attempting to join up with the British at Lens. This seems a big mistake; but the reasons for this plan of action are not known.

The Crown Prince of Bavaria was enabled through these delays to direct a counter-attack against the British right. This commenced at one o'clock, and the Highlanders and London Territorials were slowly driven back from the top of Hill 70. Still Loos had been won in this first day's fighting. The enemy had laid mines under the church tower; but Major E. B. Blogg cut the fuse, and so prevented them from exploding. Strangely enough, they had not undermined " Tower Bridge," probably because they did not wish to destroy so valuable an observation post while there was any chance of their winning it back. It was a great advantage



Drawn by F. de Haenen

THE GUARDS STORMING THE CHALK-PITS AT THE BATTLE OF LOOS

to the British, who had shot down all the snipers, observers, and machine gunners who had been stationed upon it.

All through the night the Highlanders and Territorials were still fighting against the Bavarians on Hill 70 and at the Chalk Pit. In Loos wounds were being treated and operations performed in the dim light of cellars and dug-outs. To the left of the line the exhausted troops of the 1st Corps were relieved by the 28th Division.

On the next day, the 26th of September, fighting went on all along the line; but not much progress was made, though the famous 7th Division, which had done such fine work in defending the Belgian army in its retreat from Antwerp, took once more the Hulluch Quarries. The 7th Division, however, suffered a great loss; for its leader, Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, the hero of the First Battle of Ypres, was wounded, and died the next day.

On the 27th of September two divisions of the famous Prussian Guards were brought up to Vimy. They had been hastily summoned from the Russian front. Sir John French had brought up the British Guards Division to try to take Hill 70 again. Meanwhile the Germans made desperate attacks with great numbers of men on the 9th Division on the Hohenzollern Redoubt, and pushed the troops back to its eastern corner. Meanwhile the Guards, with the Highlanders and Territorials, made the most heroic attempts to advance; but they could not, in spite of the brilliant fighting of the Scots Guards, get beyond the crest of Hill 70.

The Battle of Loos really came to an end on the 28th of September. The enemy line had not been broken, nor had any very great advance been made over the ground. Two days later French troops took over the British line from their own left to Loos and Hill 70, part of which remained to the British at the end of the battle. The French had gained possession of Souchez; but the results of the great offensive in Artois, as in Champagne, were not what the Allies had hoped. In both cases, but especially at Loos, it seems as though the

details of the campaign had not been thoroughly thought out. The British should have taken Lens, for it was all but theirs in the first day's fighting. But the failure to bring up sufficient reserves, and the fact that the French seem to have fought quite independently, gave the Germans their chance to counter-attack.

Still, in a " war of attrition " such as this war had become, when victory must be in the end to the one who can hold out longest with supplies of men and munitions, the great offensive was not wasted. The Germans suffered great losses in killed and wounded and prisoners, and this was a move in the direction of victory for the Allies. But the results of the great effort, and especially of the splendid heroism of our men, were not what they should have been, and it is difficult not to conclude that our leadership was hardly worthy of the splendid material at its disposal.

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST OF SERVIA

DURING the first five months of the war the Austrians had tried hard to conquer Servia. The Austrian armies made three invasions of her territory, but were driven back with a rush in December 1914 from the mountain passes, from which they had hoped to advance on Nish, and pushed across the frontier. The German Government declared that they had required the troops fighting in Servia for the campaign in Galicia, and that when the Russians had been driven from Galicia the Austrians would turn to deal with Servia again. It was eight months after this before Galicia was at last cleared from the army of Russia, and then Germany kept her promise, and a new and deadly attack was turned upon Servia, whose small but splendid army had seen so much of war in the last few years. The attack had already been planned when Brest-Litovsk fell, on the 25th of August, and immediately afterwards the group of armies which had been fighting under General Mackensen was drawn off to the Austro-Servian frontier, where the armies which had driven the Russians back in Galicia were already waiting.

The Serbs had a thorough contempt for the Austrian and German troops drawn up ready to advance against them. They were certainly not the best of the Austro-German troops. But now Servia was threatened, not by these troops alone, but by another enemy on their eastern borders—their old enemy Bulgaria. It will be remembered how, after the Balkan States had conquered Turkey in 1912, they turned against one an-

other to quarrel over the lands they had won, and Bulgaria was still full of hatred for the Serbs.

All during the war the Allies had been anxious as to what part the different Balkan States would play. It was always feared that Bulgaria might join in the war, and help the Germans against Servia. The Bulgarian king, Ferdinand, a Frenchman by birth, is very ambitious, and there was no doubt that he would try to join the side which he thought was winning. He was now persuaded by the fact of the Russian retreat before the Germans that Germany was to be the conqueror, and after the fall of Vilna it became clear that Bulgaria was going to turn against Servia. This was base ingratitude, for it was the Serbs who had freed Bulgaria from the Turks.

The Bulgars had been mobilized for some time, but declared that this was only to defend their own "neutrality." But there were German officers in Bulgaria, and Russia sent an ultimatum to the Bulgarian Government, threatening war if these were not dismissed. The Bulgarian Prime Minister answered with the lie that there were no German officers there. This Minister, M. Radoslavoff, was the only one among the chief men of Bulgaria who was in favour of the King's policy. Some of the chief men protested to Ferdinand, and even warned him that kings had had their heads cut off before now. Ferdinand answered that he could look after his own head; and it was not very long before the men who had dared to point out to him the wrongfulness of his policy found themselves in prison. The chief Bulgar generals refused to lead their armies in such a war. The best Bulgars felt that Russia was the protectress of the Slav race; and that it was absolute treason to the Slav peoples to help the Austrians in their unjust war against the Serbs. The well-known Bulgarian general Dmitrieff was fighting on the Russian side in Galicia, and when he knew that King Ferdinand was actually going to attack the sister nation which had saved Bulgaria from the Turks, he sent back the decora-

tions which he had received from the King as a recognition of his fine generalship in the Balkan wars.

When it was certain that Ferdinand meant to help the Germans, it was important for the Allies to know what Greece meant to do. Greece was really joined in a treaty with Servia, and she should really, if she acted with strict honour, join in the war to help the Serbs, now that Bulgaria was going in against them. Five days after the fall of Vilna the Greeks imitated the Bulgarians by mobilizing their army too, and everyone naturally thought that Greece was going to the help of Servia. The splendid statesman M. Venizelos was then at the head of the Greek Government. It was known afterwards that he had actually promised the help of Greek troops if the Allies also landed 150,000 troops at Salonika, a port which they could then use as a base for their troops as they advanced into Servia. On the 5th of October a small body of Allied troops was landed at Salonika; the number was to be increased as quickly as possible.

On the next day Venizelos spoke in the Greek Parliament, declaring that Greece should help Servia if she were attacked; but the Allies were shocked to hear that the King of Greece, Constantine, had told the Prime Minister that he could not agree to this. It was clear that King Constantine, whose wife is a German princess, did not mean to fight against Germany, although Greece was really bound in honour to do so if Servia were attacked. Probably Constantine, like Ferdinand, was deceived by the German advance into Russia, and believed that Germany was going to win. He did not want to be on the losing side. M. Venizelos resigned. The troops at Salonika were in a dangerous position. It was feared that the Greek army might be sent against them. The Greeks are not good soldiers; but their army would certainly have been able to destroy this little body of troops. However, Greece did not forget herself so much as to join in on the other side. King Constantine took what he thought was the safest course—he did nothing.

At this point the British General Staff decided that no real

help could be given to Servia. They were probably right in thinking that it was best to go on fighting the Germans on other fronts. But the disappointment must have been terrible to the Serbs, who had naturally hoped for the help of both Greece and the Allies in the terrible struggle before them.

The attack on Servia was begun by Mackensen, who had now left the Russian front. His armies stretched along the rivers Drina, Save, and Danube. All three rivers were crossed on the first day of the campaign. The Bulgarians meanwhile had not begun to attack, but were drawn up in two great groups on the eastern borders of Servia. One was in the valley of the Timok, between Roumania and Bulgaria, and the other farther south, threatening Uskub.

The Servian commander, the fine old Marshal Putnik, was, of course, obliged to leave troops to defend the important positions along the frontier, and thus there were fewer troops than ever to defend the country against the Austro-Germans. But the Serbs were much finer soldiers than the troops sent against them. So well did they fight that perhaps Marshal Putnik made a mistake in being encouraged to hold his line against the Austro-Germans too far to the north, so giving the Bulgarians a better chance when they did begin to advance. The attack on the Danube line was commanded by Mackensen himself, and met with a splendid resistance. Belgrade was not taken until the 9th of October, and then only after fierce fighting from street to street. Semendria fell next day. It was now that the Bulgars began to cross the frontier in the Timok valley; but even yet they did not declare war. The cunning King Ferdinand was anxious to make sure that the Germans were really making headway before he committed himself. On the 14th of October, however, Bulgaria formally declared war on Servia.

The Serbs were now fighting an enemy more than twice their own number. There were about 250,000 Serbs and about an equal number of Austrian and German troops, and the Bulgars had thrown 300,000 more into the fight. The Serbs had no chance, not only because of the great numbers

against them, but because of the arrangement of the troops; for the enemy was attacking along two-thirds of the frontier. If the Serbs had had to meet only the attack from the north, they would no doubt have thrown the enemy back, as they had done before. But the position was impossible, with the Bulgars threatening the line of supply and even the line of retreat. The Serbs, however, were determined to fight a campaign, and not merely to flee before the invader. The Bulgars fought well, striking at the important centres where they could best weaken the Serbs.

The Bulgars, under General Bojadieff, attacked on the line along the Timok valley from Negotin to Pirot, so distracting the Serbs from the Austro-Germans, who were making but slow progress on the Save and Danube. More important than this was the attack of the Bulgars, under General Todoroff, against the Servian frontier, near the important towns of Uskub and Veles. Uskub is the great Servian railway junction from which lines run to Nish, Salonika, and Mitrovitza. The line from Mitrovitza, passing through a maze of hills, was the only way in which the Serbs could be attacked from the rear. It was, therefore, of the greatest importance to them to keep this line safe, and, therefore, to keep Uskub in their own hands. From Uskub, too, runs a road due east to Tetovo, and from here the only road to Macedonia, and the only means of communication between the Serbs and the Allies, and therefore, too, the only road by which the Serbs could receive supplies and munitions. Veles was almost as important as Uskub, for if the enemy took Veles they could easily advance and take Uskub.

The Allied troops, which had been already landed at Salonika by the time the attack on Servia began, were not withdrawn, but were put under the command of the French general Serrail, and did what they could to help the Serbs. It was not very much. The Allies, though they had meant to help the Serbs, had really hindered them; for when Bulgaria began to mobilize the Serbs wanted to attack her, guessing

that the troops were to be used against them. The Allies had persuaded Servia not to do this, thinking that Bulgaria might be kept out of the war after all. As it turned out, the Serbs were right, and if they had attacked Bulgaria at the beginning before she was really prepared, the whole story of the fighting might have been different. The Allies had advised the strictly right and honourable thing; but it turned out badly for Servia, who knew that she was not dealing with honourable people.

On the 14th of October the Bulgars captured Vrania, on the railway line from Nish to Uskub; but for days there was the fiercest fighting outside the town, and the Bulgars were prevented from pressing on. On the 20th of October they took Veles, and on the 22nd Uskub; but General Serrail coming to the help of the Serbs, the Bulgars were driven from Veles again. The Austro-German troops made very slow progress. Marshal Putnik kept them from joining up with the Bulgars until the 26th of October. On the 27th the Serbs took Uskub again; but the Bulgars took Veles again on the next day. Meanwhile, from north and east the Austrians, Germans, and Bulgarians pushed on, reaching the chief Servian arsenal, Kragujevatz, on the 1st of November. It had taken three weeks for one part of the line to advance so far. To the north-east the line had not pushed one-third of this distance forward. It seems really a pity that the Servian commander devoted so much strength to holding this line back, instead of turning his chief attention to preventing the Bulgars closing up his line of communication with the Allies.

The pity of this was seen in the later history of the campaign. When Servia had been invaded before, the Austrians had advanced successfully to the heart of the country; and then, when they reached the wild hills and mountains of the centre, had found themselves entirely without road and rail, and unable to cope with an enemy who knew every corner of every mountain path. From here the Austrians had been hurled back, and people half expected that the same thing might happen again. But the Serbs were by this time very



...INVASION O... ...ANUBE IN FACE OF THE SERVIAN GUNS

short of ammunition; and in the early days of November, although the fighting was in this wild hill country, the Austro-Germans made quicker progress than they had done in the previous three weeks.

The Bulgars followed up their capture of Uskub by pushing forward into Macedonia, which is the extreme south of Servia, towards Monastir, by the capture of which they hoped to cut the communications between Servia and the Allies. It seems a pity that greater use had not been made of these communications. If the Allies had decided not to help in the Servian campaign by actual fighting, it seems that they might at least have hurried up the supplies and ammunition which would have given the brave Serbs a chance to make a last good stand in their native mountains.

Meanwhile a more important advance had been made. The Servian capital is, of course, Belgrade; but early in the war it was considered safer to make Nish the centre of government. The enemy now advanced with all speed towards Nish. The Bulgars advanced to Nish from two directions—the north-east and the south; but they were driven back again and again before they entered the city on the 4th of November. The Serbs had taken away all important Government papers, and they had also done all they could to destroy the railway which runs through Nish to Constantinople. Bridges were blown up, tunnels and cuttings destroyed, and it took the enemy at least a month to make the line fit for use again.

From Nish the Austro-Germans pressed forward into the centre of Servia, while the Bulgars marched west and took Tetovo; but it was retaken by the Serbs, who made a good fight for each important position, and who were conducting their retreat in the most orderly way, fighting brisk rearguard actions, and leaving nothing behind for the benefit of the enemy.

By this time the Allies had altered their resolution as to not taking any part in the Servian campaign. General Joffre had visited London at the end of October, and persuaded the British General Staff to send more troops to Salonika after all.

It is said that Lord Kitchener was never very much in favour of this plan, believing, as seems true, that it was too late to help Servia in this way. However, reinforcements, both French and British, were sent steadily to Salonika from this time, so that at the end of 1915 there was quite a considerable army there. General Serrail had not, however, enough men during the time when the Serbs were being driven from Servia to help them very much. He fought, however, in many small engagements with the Bulgars, and did a certain amount of damage with his artillery. While the fight was raging round Tetovo the French took Gradsko, a place from which an army at the important town of Prilep could be easily attacked. On the 16th of November Prilep was taken; but the Bulgars were thrown back with great loss when they advanced from here against the French on the river Teherna. The famous French guns, the "75's," worked great destruction on the enemy.

The Austro-Germans were pressing on, too, though they suffered terribly in the mountains now that the Servian winter was well begun. Three days after the Bulgars took Prilep the Austro-Germans took Novi Bazar.

The Allies had meanwhile done their best to find out what Greece meant to do. There had even been a fear that she would join in the war on the side of Germany, though this was never very likely. A distinguished French statesman, M. Denys Cochin, who was very much liked in Athens, was sent on a visit there, and the people gave him a very hearty welcome. The King received him courteously. At the same time the Allies declared a "peaceful blockade" against Greece. Greek ships were prevented from sailing from the ports of the Allies, and cablegrams were stopped at Allied stations. This was to remind Greece of the power which the Allies, and especially Great Britain, had to inconvenience her if she should think of opposing them.

Greece is, of course, a maritime country, with an immense coast line in proportion to her size, and depending very much on her large trade by sea. If a real blockade were set in motion

against her she would suffer dreadfully. Some sort of understanding was arrived at with Greece ; but she would not join the Allies. Lord Kitchener visited King Constantine two days after the visit of M. Cochin, but his persuasions had no more effect. King Constantine was a soldier himself, and full of admiration for the German military methods. It is a great pity that Ferdinand of Bulgaria and Constantine of Greece were able to impose their wills on people the best of whom were entirely opposed to their policy.

By the end of November the Serbs were driven from the Kossovo plateau, and fell back into Montenegro and Albania. On the 3rd of December Monastir, the last stronghold, fell, and the conquest of Servia was achieved. The Bulgars had acted with the greatest treachery to the Serbs. They had, however, fought the campaign cleverly. The Austro-Germans had not done so well, for after all the Serbs had held them back, so that it took them two months to overrun this little country, with its small army. Many Serbs were now added to the great number of refugees whom the Germans had driven from their own land. Those who remained in Servia suffered the most terrible things from the Bulgars, until even the Germans interfered to stop the worst atrocities. But the Servian army was not destroyed. The soldiers still held together, reduced in numbers but unconquered in spirit, waiting and preparing for the day when they might fight to win their country back again.

CHAPTER IV

THE OPPORTUNITY OF ITALY

On the 23rd of May 1915 Italy declared war on Austria, and joined in the great European struggle on the side of the Allies. It has been said over and over again that this war was begun as a war of salvation for the "little nations." Italy can hardly be called a little nation; but she is a young nation, and for that reason has certain weaknesses. Garibaldi and the Italian patriots of 1867 fought for and achieved the union of the little states of the Italian peninsula, to make a kingdom of Italy which should take a proper position among the nations of Europe. But a large part of what is really the north of Italy was not included in the new kingdom, because it was in the hands of Austria, having been taken by her in the days of Italy's weakness. There were many people in Italy who felt the injustice of this, and were determined to win back the *Trentino* from Austria at the earliest opportunity.

To the north and north-east Austria had her frontiers set forward in Italian territory. The strength of Austria's position here was a perpetual threat to Italy. The Italians could never feel safe; for in case of any dispute with Austria troops could be poured from these splendid positions straight into the plains beneath. The unfairness of Austria's position has been well shown in the difficulty the Italians have met with in trying to drive them back to their own natural frontiers. In the north of Italy the Trentino made a salient into Italian territory. Generally a salient into another country requires very strong defences, as it is liable to attack from

three sides, just like a salient in a line of battle. But the Trentino was naturally so strong that it required very few troops indeed to hold it. The only way a large army could advance into the district was along the valley of the river Adige, and at the head of this valley stands the strong fortress of Trent. Even if the Italians could take this fortress, they would then have to cross another great mountain tract before they reached the Brenner Pass, by which they could cross into Austrian territory. General Cadorno, the Italian Commander-in-Chief, decided to advance in the Trentino, but not to make his chief attack there. He must have wished very much to do so, for if the Italian armies once got through the Trentino they would be well on the way to Vienna. If the Russians had not been pushed back in Galicia, the Italian and Russian armies there might have joined up, and marched together on the Austrian capital. But the Russian advance had been turned back at the Dunajec, and Italy had to be content with a less ambitious campaign. General Cadorno decided to make his chief attack on the Austrian territory round Trieste, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic. This district, like the Trentino, was really Italian, but was also held by Austria. The attack on the Trentino would be made chiefly to prevent the Austrians from sending an army through there to attack the Italian armies near Trieste.

Italy had an army of 600,000 men to send to the frontiers. Besides these, she had over two million men of the Territorial Militia, who were not sufficiently trained for actual fighting on the frontier. The Allies hoped that some of these reserves would be sent to Alsace or the Dardanelles, to help in the general fighting; but General Cadorno decided to keep them in Italy. Though the Italian people were very enthusiastic about the war, and very sympathetic with the Allies for the terrible suffering caused by the German "atrocities," the Italian Government joined in the struggle, not from motives like these, but for the cause of Italian independence. The fact that Austria was fighting with one ally in a world-wide war

gave Italy the chance to win that complete independence which she could not have while Austria held great tracts of land within her borders. She seized the opportunity.

King Humbert declared that these were the reasons for Italy's joining in the war, in the Proclamation he made in the third week of May :—

" Soldiers of Land and Sea !—The solemn hour of the vindication of the nation's claims has come. Following the example of my great ancestors, I assume to-day supreme command of the forces by land and sea with sure confidence in the victory which your courage, self-sacrifice, and discipline will achieve.

" The enemy whom you are to fight is tried and worthy of your arms. With the advantage of ground and scientific preparations in his favour, he will offer an obstinate resistance ; but your indomitable spirit will assuredly overcome him. Soldiers, to you is the glory of hoisting the tricolour of Italy upon the sacred bounds which nature marks as the confines of our country ; to you is the glory of completing the task begun so heroically by our fathers."

In these stirring words Italy's King declared the chief motive for which the Italians were fighting—the winning of their own natural boundaries for the greater security of Italian independence. But even if the Italians did not take any part in the fighting on the great battle fronts, they were, of course, helping the Allies by keeping Austrian troops engaged on the Italian frontiers, and so preventing them from being used in other places.

The first blow in the war between Italy and Austria was struck by the Austrian navy. Italy has quite a good navy ; but she had not expected an attack from the Austrians by sea, and was not prepared to resist in time. In the early dawn of the 24th of May an Austrian squadron, consisting of two battleships, four cruisers, and about twenty destroyers, dashed out of their base at Pola to raid the Adriatic coast of Italy between Brindisi and Venice. The squadron was accom-

panied by aeroplanes, and the plan was to bombard important points on the Italian coast from the air and sea, in order to hamper and delay the mobilization of the Italian army. At Venice an attack was made on the arsenal and great oil-tanks and balloon shed. The Italian torpedo-boat base at Porte Corsini was attacked by some of the destroyers; but they were driven off, and one was seriously damaged, before they could do any harm. The bridge at the railway station and part of the line at Sinigaglia were destroyed by the guns of one of the cruisers. Several other coast towns were damaged in the two hours' raid, and before the Italian navy could turn to deal with it the squadron was safe back again in Pola.

The fighting on land began on that same day, when the Austrians blew up two bridges across the Adige. By this they showed that they meant to stand on the defensive in the Trentino. On the eastern Adriatic shores the Italians had massed their troops for the attack on the Austrians, who were drawn up under the Archduke Eugene some distance from the eastern bank of the river Isonzo. The Austrian line touched the river at one point only, where they held the strongly fortified town of Gorizia, against which the Italians were to throw attack after attack for months to come.

Meanwhile it was necessary for the Italians to press forward in the Trentino; for unless they kept Austrian troops fighting here, these would be sent across to the Isonzo front to strengthen the Austrian armies there.

The story of the Italian campaign is not a record of advance. In spite of the bravest and fiercest fighting, the Italians did not gain much ground. This only shows how strong was the Austrian hold on Italian territory; and even if the Italians did not cover much ground, they occupied themselves in making the positions they won very strong, so that if the Austrians decided at any point on a great offensive against them, they would be well prepared to drive off their attacks. They advanced towards the great fortress of Trent from several directions. They pushed forward into the Trentino along the

valleys of the Adige and the Lugana. The Austrians had to withdraw from Borga, half-way between Trent and the frontier; but the Italians could not enter it, as it could be bombarded from the mountain heights still occupied by the Austrians. The Italians also pressed over the frontier to attack the fortress of Riva, on Lake Garda. The taking of this fortress would be another step in the closing in on Trent. It took them three weeks to capture Pregasina, two miles within the frontier. The west of the Trentino is so strong that it might seem almost impossible to advance into it from this direction; but even here, near the Tornale Pass, the Italians gained some ground. In some of these advances progress was only made possible by the wonderful work of the engineers, who cut and carved and built upon the mountains, so that supplies and munitions were carried over what seemed impossible places. In the Tyrol, too, the Italians quickly seized important positions. The famous *Alpini* won the Val d'Inferno Pass by a brilliant bayonet charge on the first day of the war. But the real value of these attacks on the Austrian frontier to the north of Italy was that they distracted the attention of the Austrians from the campaign in the Isonzo district.

The battle ground in this district is quite different from any other part of the Austro-Italian frontier. The land through which the Isonzo runs after it pours from a deep gorge in the Julian Alps is quite flat. Through this flat land the river runs for four miles, until it reaches the low and barren plateau called the *Carso*. From here south to the town of Trieste the river runs again through a narrow strip of flat country.

On the other Austro-Italian frontiers Austria had not really to defend a border line. She had merely to hold strongly fortified positions. Here, along the Isonzo, on open ground, it was quite different. A far larger army in proportion was needed to defend this frontier. It is not clear why the Austrians decided to form their defensive line so far from the river. Afterwards they fought hard to win the ground back as far as the river bank; but it was then too late. They tried



AUSTRIANS AND ITALIANS FIGHTING ON A GLACIER

(Italians in the foreground)

especially hard to throw the Italians back from the top of the Carso plateau, which they had soon occupied, and where they were by this time firmly entrenched.

The Italians pushed forward quickly at first, but they could not push on to Trieste until they had taken the immensely strong fortress of Gorizia (or Görz, as the Austrians called it), and this fortress was to resist them for many months. The Italian navy helped the troops, as the Allied navies were doing on so many other fronts. Among the coast islands the destroyers were busy. They did useful work in shelling the shipyards of Monfalcone. Italian airmen helped in the bombardment, and were also very active and daring in their attacks on the railway line between Trieste and Gorizia, by which all supplies for Gorizia had to be carried.

The Italians had reached the Isonzo, but had not crossed it, by the end of May. The season was very wet, and the flooding of the river banks made the fighting very difficult, especially as the Austrians had destroyed all the bridges across the river. But in spite of every difficulty the Italians took up a strong line along the river bank, and even pushed across to the farther bank at one or two places.

All the land to the west of the river was occupied by the Italians. Military students had always believed that if war broke out between Austria and Italy the Italians would have to evacuate large districts in their borderland to take up a defensive line strong enough to resist the enemy. But now the opposite had happened. The fact that Austria was fighting in so many other places gave Italy this advantage in her fight for freedom, that she was able to fight on the enemy's land.

But the splendid advance made in the first few weeks of war could naturally not go on at that rate. The Austrians soon realized that they had tried to hold the line with too few men, and sent large reinforcements in July. They tried hard to throw the Italians back from the Carso plateau, but did not succeed. On the other hand, neither could the Italians

take Gorizia. For months the situation hardly changed at all, though fighting went on along all the frontiers. During the winter months the soldiers fighting in the Trentino suffered terribly from the cold; but the Italians felt that they were fighting for freedom in a very special way, not only for the freedom of all nations, but for the freedom and unity of their beloved Italy, for which their fathers had fought and died before them.

CHAPTER V

THE ROMANCE OF THE DARDANELLES

THE story of how the Allies tried by sea and land to win the Dardanelles in the spring of 1915 has already been told. Perhaps the bravest deeds of the war were done there, then and later. The most splendid results were hoped for if only the Straits could be won. Russia would then have been able to send out and sell great quantities of wheat and other things which she grows, and which cannot be used up by her own population, and the Allies would have been able to send in to Russia the munitions she so much needed.

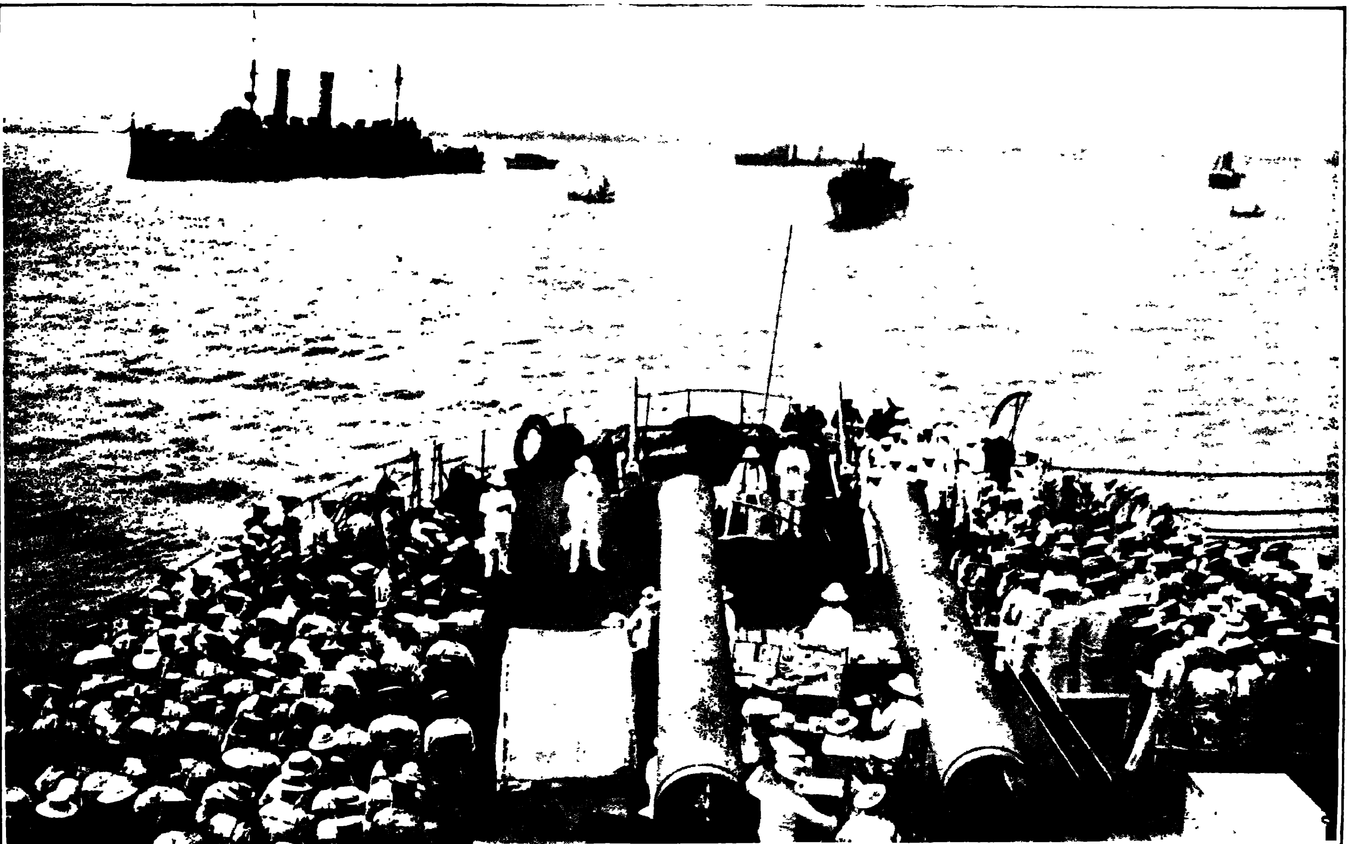
One great mistake was made at the beginning, when it was thought that the warships alone might break down the forts and win the Straits. Afterwards, of course, soldiers were sent to fight by land; but the Turks had been warned, and great numbers of Turkish soldiers had been sent to defend the Straits. This made the landing of the French and British troops very difficult, and it was only because they were splendid men that they were able to land at all.

Every inch of ground won in Gallipoli was won by the hardest fighting and the loss of many lives. The Australian and New Zealand troops, and some of the Irish regiments, especially fought like heroes; but the land was of the most difficult kind to win. They were always fighting uphill against an enemy splendidly concealed among the "scrub," the low prickly bushes which covered the ground. By the end of May the Turks had lost 55,000 men in Gallipoli; but they threw more men in, and as the summer drew near it looked as though

the two armies were going to settle down to face each other for months with very little movement, just as the Allies and Germans were facing each other along the long line from the Flanders coast to Switzerland. Already the men in Gallipoli were feeling the heat terribly. More men fell out of the ranks through sickness than through wounds. They suffered terribly from thirst, and sometimes parties which had fought hard and advanced to a new position had to fall back again because the water supplies had not come up quickly enough. The flies settled down on food and spoiled it in a very short time. The men had to try to keep them off open tins and jars of jam and other food while they served themselves.

The general in command of the expedition in Gallipoli was Sir Ian Hamilton. He knew that victory must be won quickly if it was to be won at all. "Siege warfare" like that on the Western front would be no good at all. The chief motive for the campaign was to bring swift help to Russia. He planned, therefore, to make as rapid an advance as possible, and take the Turkish positions with a rush. He had a brilliant plan, and he nearly did what he hoped to do, but not quite. He never had really enough men—not more than 100,000; but even so he would have won the Dardanelles if he had been as good at leading his army as he was at planning the fight. As it was, some of his officers did not push on as fast as they should have done, and Sir Ian, instead of insisting, allowed them to wait. It was through this that the Dardanelles was never won after all. The story of Sir Ian Hamilton's brilliant plan and sad failure is one of the most interesting parts of the story of the war.

His plan was to land reinforcements at Anzac, and to push on from there to the heights of Sari Bair. (Anzac Cove was the name given to the spot on the Gallipoli coast where the Australians and New Zealanders made their famous landing. The name is composed of the first letters of the words "Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.") Meanwhile new troops were to be landed a few miles to the north at Suvla Bay,



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"CHURCH" ON A BRITISH WARSHIP IN THE DARDANELLES

to be pushed forward to the heights of Sari Bair from the north. Their arrival on the heights was to be a surprise for the Turks, who would be already engaged with the Anzacs advancing from the opposite side. After this the advance on to Maidos ought to be a simple matter. The Dardanelles would be won.

Even at the beginning time was lost. The landing at Suvla was to take place at night; and it was necessary to avoid moonlight nights, so that the enemy should not know of the landing. The reinforcements did not arrive before the moon was up in July, and the landing had to be put off until August. When they did arrive everything went splendidly at first, exactly according to Sir Ian Hamilton's plan. The general was on the island of Imbros, nearly equidistant from Anzac and Suvla, and from here he directed all the arrangements. The preparations were perfect. Sir Ian had arranged for a good supply of water, food, and munitions. (Up to this point munitions had been rather scarce in Gallipoli, so that the Allies had only been able to make a big artillery attack about once in every three weeks. But now there was plenty.) To triumph over the water difficulty, a great reservoir had been made on the heights at Anzac, and this was filled with a special pump. Then great quantities of water were carried in reservoirs and petroleum cans. It was part of the plan to take the enemy by surprise. It was a very difficult thing to land large reinforcements without letting the enemy know; but numbers of men were landed at Anzac and Suvla without the Turks knowing anything about it.

An attack was also to be made at Helles, to draw the attention of the enemy as much as possible from Anzac and Suvla. This attack was begun on the afternoon of the 6th of August. The British troops attacked the Turks along a line about three-quarters of a mile long. For three days a fierce fight went on. On the left of the line the British pushed the enemy back; but on the centre and right, though the men fought like lions, no progress was made. One reason for this was that the

Turks had been largely reinforced, and they were cheered up by the news of the advance of the Germans against Russia. Then they were better able to resist, because their numbers had been heavily reinforced, in preparation for an attack which would have been made against the British lines a few hours later than the time at which the British made theirs. For two days they made fierce counter-attacks; but if the British could not push them back along the whole line, neither could they move the British.

At last, on the 9th of August, the fighting died down, and the brave men who had been in three days' fierce battle were at last relieved. The British had won some ground on the left, and, better still, they had kept the attention of the Turks while more important things were happening elsewhere.

The landing of the reinforcements at Anzac and of troops at Suvla Bay, and the fighting afterwards, were of the greatest importance. Everything went well at Anzac and wrong at Suvla Bay. At Anzac General Birdwood did everything just according to Sir Ian Hamilton's fine plan; at Suvla the general in command did not push on. Time was lost, and when the Anzacs had won their way to the ridge of Chunuk Bair, from which they could see the waters of the "Narrows" below, the troops from Suvla Bay were not there to support them, and they were pushed back. No soldiers in all history have ever borne so terrible a disappointment.

General Birdwood made his own plans for the landing of the reinforcements at Anzac. This was done on three nights—the 4th, 5th, and 6th of August—and so cleverly that the Turks never guessed that any troops were being landed. The work which the Anzacs had to do was to capture the ridge above Maidos and the Narrows. This ridge was only a mile away from their positions, but was entrenched in the thorough way the Turks had learned from the Germans. The right flank of the British army lay opposite a very strong point in

the Turkish line, called *Lone Pine*. This was a very important position, because it protected the chief places from which the Turks got their water. An attack was begun on Lone Pine on the afternoon of the 6th of August. Like the fighting at Helles, this was meant more as a " diversion," to distract the attention of the Turks, than as part of the chief attack. But here again the Australians fought like heroes. At a given signal two lines of men and then a third burst from the British trenches, raced over the ground, with bullets sweeping past and shells tearing up the ground. They broke through the barbed wire, but could not even then find the enemy. Still under fire, the brave fellows tore away the heavy beams of pine-wood which covered the galleries and passages where the Turks lay hidden. When this was done they jumped down, and a terrible hand-to-hand fight went on in the dark passages. Australians and Turks pushed their bayonets into each other's bodies, and died at the same moment. A thousand men altogether fell dead in that twenty minutes' fight. The Australians had won the position, and held it, in spite of the violent counter-attacks of the next two days.

Meanwhile the main Anzac attack had been made farther along the line towards the Sari Bair ridge, at the head of which is Chunuk Bair. This ridge runs parallel to the coast, and long spurs jut out from it towards the shore, divided from one another by ravines covered with thick scrub and bushes. The highest peak of all was called in the war plans Hill 305. The way to Chunuk Bair had to be fought up two of these difficult gullies, Chailak Dere and Sazli Beit Dere. The hills from which the Turks could shoot down into these gullies on the advancing troops had first to be cleared, and this was done by " covering " columns—troops told off to take the heights and hold them while the main body pressed forward to the attack. On the peaks overlooking Chailak Dere was one of those strongly fortified positions such as were never seen before the Great War. It could hardly be taken by assault, but it was taken by a trick.

For several nights a warship threw a searchlight on this position at nine o'clock exactly, and bombarded the place for ten minutes. Then there was a pause for ten minutes, and a second bombardment, ending exactly at 9.30. The general in command guessed that the Turks would soon get used to this arrangement, and would leave their trenches until the end of the bombardment, rushing back to them in time for the infantry attack which generally follows the bombardment. This was done for several nights, and then on the night of the 6th of August the infantry began to advance the moment the bombardment began. They could not be seen as they crept forward in the black darkness outside the searchlight. As the second bombardment ended they rushed into the empty trenches, and the Turks had no chance of driving them out again. Thus by a trick a very important position was taken. Other parts of the covering party were at the same time gaining possession of other difficult positions. At one place, called *Table Top*, the height was so steep that the top seemed to bulge like a mushroom over the rock below. But the New Zealanders climbed up in face of a deadly fire, and won the position. No position seemed too difficult for them to take. The hardest task the covering column had to do was to clear the gully Chailak Dere for the advance of the attacking columns. The gully was defended by great barriers of barbed wire, much thicker and higher than usual, and behind the wire a Turkish entrenchment ran right across the ravine. It was the brave New Zealanders who cleared the way here; but many lost their lives.

By midnight the troops were pressing forward through both gullies, Chailak Dere and Sazli Beit Dere. The troops in Chailak Dere gained possession of Rhododendron Spur, not a quarter of a mile from Chunuk Bair.

Farther to the left, the left covering column had won its way through dense scrub, with a constant flank fire, to the height of Damakjelak Bair. This work was done by inexperienced troops—men of the " New Army "—under the most

difficult conditions, and, as Sir Ian Hamilton pointed out, it showed what the men of the New Army could do when they were properly led.

By this time help had been expected from Suvla, but none came. Still the Anzacs pressed on. On the morning of the 8th of August troops were advancing against the Chunuk Bair ridge itself, and General Johnston's column took possession of the crest. There were English troops, such as the Gloucesters, with the New Zealanders, Welshmen, and some Maoris, the fine New Zealand natives who had offered their services to the Empire. The brave officer who led the advance, Lieutenant-Colonel Malone, was shot dead on the crest as he marked out the line to be held. Many officers, indeed, fell in the advance and when the crest was gained. The 7th Gloucesters, men of the New Army too, found themselves under such heavy fire on the crest that they could not entrench themselves properly. Yet, practically without cover, they fought from midday to sunset without officers, *for all their officers* had been killed or wounded.

As help did not come from Suvla, it was decided to hold the line, rest the men as much as possible, and prepare for a big attack on the morning of the 9th of August. On that morning it was that Major Allanson, with a party of Indian troops, made his way up the slopes of Sari Bair and looked down upon the Straits below. The 6th Gurkhas and the 6th Lancashires even began an advance down the eastern slopes, but were met by a terrible fire from the Turks, who had at last begun to understand what the British were trying to do. By this time a brigade of infantry which had been sent up Chailak Dere under General Baldwin ought to have come up in support. If they had done so the Gurkhas and Lancashires could have held their posts; but the brigade had missed its way in the night, and came up just a few minutes too late. It was a great pity; but it does not seem to have been through anyone's fault. General Baldwin was killed in a later battle. As it was, the Gurkhas and Lancashires, fighting against im-

possible odds, were driven back; and then the Turks tried to push back the New Zealanders, with the two New Army battalions who were still holding their positions at Chunuk Bair. For a day these troops bore attack after attack, and still held the ridge when they were relieved by fresh troops at night.

So tired had they been that they had not been able to entrench themselves properly, and no wire defences had been prepared as usual in defending new positions. So the new defenders found themselves almost unprotected against the fierce attack which the Turks made on the morning of the next day, the 10th of August. So great was the number of the Turks that it was impossible to stand against them. General Baldwin had to draw his men back, and many fell. The Turks pressed on over the crest at Chunuk Bair; but a terrible fire from land and sea greeted them. The shots made great gaps in their closely formed ranks; but still they pressed on down the western slopes, though they were mowed down here in great numbers by ten machine guns belonging to the New Zealand Brigade. So fast and furious was the shooting that the barrels of the guns became red hot.

Farther to the left also great masses of Turks pressed on to the Farm and north-eastern spurs of Chunuk Bair. The British line broke here, and the men were thrown back to the foot of the hill; but General Street, a Staff officer who was looking after the transport of food and water, rallied them and led them back. Round the Farm they fought a terrible fight. Generals fought side by side with their men, and soldiers dropped their weapons and rushed furiously at one another's throats. The Turks were at last thrown back on to the eastern slopes again. By this time General Birdwood had lost 12,000 of his men and officers—about a third of his whole force.

In his great dispatch describing the campaign Sir Ian Hamilton tells how at this point he thought of using his last reserves of men. If he had done so the positions would probably have

been won; but he was afraid that there would not be enough water to supply all the men. The troops suffered from a terrible thirst, and when mules arrived with water many would rush to lick the drops which came through the canvas bags. It seems almost a pity that the Commander-in-Chief did not use his last reserves if it meant victory; but he ought not really to have needed these. He had counted on the help of the troops from Suvla Bay, and these had not made headway. There seems to have been no reason for this, except that the officer in command did not push them on quickly, according to his orders.

The landing at Suvla had been carried out quite safely, except at one point, and this was a place which General Stopford had suggested as a better point for landing than that selected by Sir Ian Hamilton. General Stopford had 10,000 men, and there were only about 4000 Turks to oppose him in this part of the peninsula, and these were not particularly well led or entrenched. At the point suggested by General Stopford the shore was not really very suitable for landing. The "lighters," or small flat boats which carried the men, could not get very close to the beach, and instead of leaping on to dry sand, as at the other landing-places, the men had to wade waist deep in water. The Turks were on the watch here too, and poured an enfilading fire into the men on the shore, and even came down in the darkness and got between the British and their supports farther back. Still, there were only a few losses, and the expedition began to press forward. But the whole tale is different from that of the Anzac campaign.

The 32nd and 34th Brigades should have been united in a determined attack; but no order was given for this, and the men began to grow confused and nervous. Still, the enemy was driven over "Hill 10"; but again the general arrangement of the fighting was not good. Men were sent into battle tired and hungry when it seems fresher troops were available to do the work. Some Irish regiments were left for thirty-six

hours without water in positions they had won by hard fighting. The distribution of the water seems to have been badly managed, for there was really plenty for all.

Very little progress was made on the first day, and yet when, on the 8th of August, General Stopford gave the order to the commanders of divisions to "push on," the answer was given that the men were so weary and exhausted for want of water that this could not be done. This was the state of things when the Anzac men were going forward to what would have been certain victory if only these men from Suvla had been brought up in time. Sir Ian Hamilton points out in his dispatch that the Turks, too, were weary, and the advance against them would have been fairly easy; also that the quickest way to get to a good water supply was to push on. Yet General Stopford did not insist on the advance, and neither did Sir Ian Hamilton himself interfere as a Commander-in-Chief might naturally have done. A valuable day was lost, although the officers knew that Turkish reinforcements were being brought up. Even when towards evening the men were rested, and had had food and water, the divisional commanders still objected, not liking to begin the advance by night; though this was the only way in which it could have been made before the enemy's reinforcements had come up. Sir Ian Hamilton insisted that at least one brigade—the 32nd—should advance at once; but there was delay even in this, as the different parts of the brigade were scattered. The next day an attempt was made to win the Anaferta ridge; but there were now three times as many Turks as there were on the 7th of August. The Suvla Bay expedition had failed, and the great chance to win the Dardanelles was spoilt.

The Commander-in-Chief sent home for more men and munitions, and seems to have thought that with great numbers the Straits might yet be won. But men were wanted elsewhere, especially for the great September offensive in the West. Day followed day, and week followed week in the Dardanelles, with but small reinforcements of men and munitions, while more



THE YEOMAN DIVISION (DISMOUNTED) STORMING BURNT HILL, SUVLA BAY, ON AUGUST 21, 1915

and more men fell sick. Then on the 11th of October Lord Kitchener cabled to General Hamilton, asking him what he thought would be the number of losses if the troops should be withdrawn from Gallipoli—for it had come to this. The great fight for the Dardanelles, begun with so much hope and fought by so many heroes, with deeds of daring which will make the name of *Anzac* remembered for ever, was to be given up. Through the " inertia " of the commanders of the troops at Suvla, the scheme had ended in failure. General Hamilton could not bear to think of a withdrawal, and he was recalled to London on the 16th of October.

A splendid though at that time not a very well-known general, Sir C. C. Monro, was sent out in his place, and reported that the evacuation or withdrawal of the troops should be made as soon as possible. In England people were still looking forward to the winning of Constantinople through the Straits, when the news began to spread that Lord Kitchener himself had gone out to get the troops safely out of Gallipoli. It is an even more dangerous thing to remove troops from such positions than to land them. Lord Kitchener was back in London by the end of October, having visited Greece and Servia on the way. By this time some of the troops from Suvla were already fighting in Servia. The withdrawal of these had been an easy matter ; but the complete withdrawal of troops from Anzac and Suvla a few days before Christmas was a much more dangerous thing. Clever generals gave it as their opinion that half of the men would be killed or wounded. Yet the withdrawal was made, under the splendid generalship of Sir Charles Monro, with the loss of only two men.

When this news became known even the Germans could not help expressing their admiration at so wonderful an achievement. The Turkish trenches were sometimes only ten yards away from those which the British were leaving. Everything of any value—guns, animals, medicines, and stores—was removed, and in some cases, where stores had to be left, they were set on fire in such a way that they would burn brightly only when the with-

drawal was over. Once again the navy did splendid work, sending great numbers of lighters, tugs, transports, and other boats to carry the men and baggage silently and swiftly away. When the withdrawal was complete the warships fired at the piers and other works which had been made for the use of the troops. The Turks did not guess yet what had happened, and for a whole morning bombarded the empty trenches. It was some consolation that the troops at Suvla did some good work in the end by protecting the flank of the Anzacs during the withdrawal.

Everyone thought that the troops at Helles would remain, as this position was not so difficult, and was protected on both flanks by the navy. But on the 7th and 8th of January this was evacuated too. In spite of a terrible storm which washed away some of the piers, the troops were safely embarked. Only one British soldier was wounded, and there were no losses at all among the French troops, who had been with the British at this point. The Turks guessed what was happening, and shelled the beaches in the middle of the night; but the troops were by this time safely out at sea.

The splendid withdrawal from the Dardanelles did something to comfort the people of the British Empire for the terrible failure. Mistake after mistake had been made in the Dardanelles. The landing of troops should have been made sooner, and when troops were landed greater numbers should have been sent. Lord Kitchener confessed that he had not realized before he went there all the difficulties of the fighting in the Dardanelles. The heroic fighting of the Anzacs had nearly won the Narrows, even in face of such terrible difficulties. The expedition was not altogether a loss, for great numbers of Turks, who might have been fighting elsewhere, had been kept occupied on this front. But the thing for which the story of the Dardanelles will be ever remembered is the wonderful heroism of the Australians and New Zealanders, and the heroic 29th Division, who cheerfully laid down their lives in the service of the Empire. Australia cannot help but

mourn for her sons, and perhaps she will feel that their lives were wasted, since others failed to help them to victory; but she can console herself with the thought that among the heroes of the Great War the Anzacs stand out as perhaps the most heroic figures of all.

CHAPTER VI

WAR BY AIR AND SEA

THE most terrible thing about the Great War was the way in which the Germans, in violation of all treaties, attacked civilians as well as soldiers. They seemed to be full of a mad hate for their enemies, and especially for England. By sea and by air they attacked defenceless people, and these crimes became more frequent as the war went on. The German airships early in the war attacked Paris and Warsaw and other places; but since those days London and Paris had been darkened every night, while great searchlights flashed through the sky, searching for the "Zeppelins" which never seemed to come. (People call all the huge German airships "Zeppelins"; but the name really belongs to *one* only of the four kinds which Germany uses.)

As the year 1915 went on the raids of the German airships on undefended places became more frequent. Yet in the air work on the battle fronts the British and French airmen were always much better and braver than the Germans. The work of reconnaissance was splendidly carried out, and when the Germans attacked the Allied airmen it was generally with anti-aircraft guns from the ground, and not by their aircraft in the air. On the other hand, the British airmen took every chance they got of attacking the enemy's machines. The story is told that a young German, new to the air service, asked how he would know which was a British machine. He was told, "Oh, you'll know it fast enough. It will attack you."

The British air service improved rapidly as the war went

on; and so did the services of the other countries. Experiments were made, and new kinds of aircraft invented. The Russian air service was not very good at the beginning of the war, but it became very fine as time went on. Its special invention is the Ilya-Muromets biplane, which is sixty-five feet long, weighs three and a half tons, and can carry an enormous weight, like the Zeppelins. This biplane is more stable than an airship can be, and its aim is, therefore, more accurate. The Zeppelins generally send their bombs wide of the mark; but the splendid work done by the Russian biplanes in the Great Retreat shows how true their aim is. The Russian aircraft did their work of destruction, as did the British and the French, against places of importance in the war—such as railway stations, airship sheds, munition factories, etc. This they were quite justified in doing by all the rules of war.

The German aeroplanes and German airmen never showed themselves as good as those of the Allies. News more often came of their dropping bombs on defenceless merchant ships in the North Sea than of their facing the Allied airmen in fair fight. The airships did more damage; but it was in swift flights across the sea in the dark hours of night, when these great "birds of prey" dropped their bombs on the defenceless population below, and hastily fled again into the darkness. There was great rejoicing in Germany at the news of these raiding attacks, in which the victims were often women and children.

The first Zeppelin raid on England was made on the coast of Norfolk, on the 19th of January 1915. After this there was an interval of nearly three months, and then during April and May raid after raid was made on the eastern counties. In these raids, fortunately, not very many people were killed. Then on the night of the 31st of May the long-expected raid on London came at last. It is supposed that the Germans were aiming at the centre of the city; but their bombs fell chiefly on some houses in a poor district of the East End. Several people were killed or injured. Again, in June, there

were three raids on the north-eastern coasts of Britain, in which a greater number of people were killed or injured than in any earlier raid. During the full summer months of July and August the raids ceased. There were no real hours of darkness to cover the airships in their work of murder. The killing of people in open towns was really murder; but the Germans always pretended that they were attacking military centres, and talked of their splendid work against the "fortress of London."

During all these raids in the first half of the year 1915, 71 grown-up people and 18 children had been killed, while 189 men and women and 31 children had been injured. The fact that not one soldier or sailor had been killed shows clearly enough that the attacks were murder and not war.

While the Zeppelins had been doing this shameful work, the aircraft of the Allies had carried out some splendid attacks on important positions of the enemy. On the 11th and 16th of February attacks were made on various positions on the Belgian coast. The first was made by a fleet of thirty-four aeroplanes and seaplanes, under the splendid airman Wing-Commander Samson. Bombs were dropped on the railway stations at Ostend and Blankenberghe. At Blankenberghe the station was completely destroyed. Bombs were thrown, too, on the great Zeppelin shed at Zeebrugge.

In the attack of the 16th of February eight French machines joined the British, who had forty of their own. Such a large number of aircraft had never joined in one attack before. They dropped bombs on different positions along the same coast, destroying several batteries and gun positions.

In March and April British airmen dropped bombs on the submarine base at Ostend, and on the works at Hoboken, where the Germans were making submarines as fast as they could. During the fighting at Neuve Chapelle bombs were dropped by airmen on the railways at Don, Menin, Douai, Lille, and Courtrai. The junction at Courtrai was quite destroyed. Then on the 7th of June Flight-Lieutenants Wilson and Mills

attacked the airship shed which the Germans had built at Evere, near Brussels, and had the great satisfaction of destroying a Zeppelin.

A thousand tales could be told of the deeds of daring, and of the great patience and courage shown by the British airmen. In many ways the men of the air service are like the men of the navy—quiet and thoughtful, and as modest as they are brave. It seems that the long flights through the air, always on the alert, never far from danger, have the same ennobling and refining influence on men's characters as the life on the limitless ocean, with its quiet and solemnity and peace.

In the raid on Courtrai Lieutenant W. B. Rhodes-Moorhouse, descending very low to drop his bombs, received a terrible wound in the thigh. But he turned to fly the thirty-five miles to the base, and made his report. He was awarded the Victoria Cross; but he had been mortally wounded, and died soon afterwards. Another hero was Captain John Aidan Liddell, who was also wounded in the thigh, on the 31st of July, near Bruges, but flew home, saving his machine and his companion, though he was nearly mad with pain. He, too, received the Victoria Cross, but died soon afterwards.

But the airman of whose daring people at home heard most was Sub-Flight-Lieutenant Warneford. On the 7th of June he was flying in a light aeroplane between Ghent and Brussels, when he suddenly saw a Zeppelin. He did not hesitate a moment, but rose up above the great airship, which was flying at a height of 6000 feet. He then descended to a distance of fifty feet from it, and dropped six bombs. The last burst the envelope of the great vessel. There was a loud explosion, and the Zeppelin burst into flames, falling a mass of wreckage to the ground, with the loss of all its crew. Lieutenant Warneford's machine was turned upside down with the force of the explosion; but the airman showed as much presence of mind as courage, got his machine right, and though he had to come down in the enemy's country, he managed to start his engine again, and flew safely back to the base. The

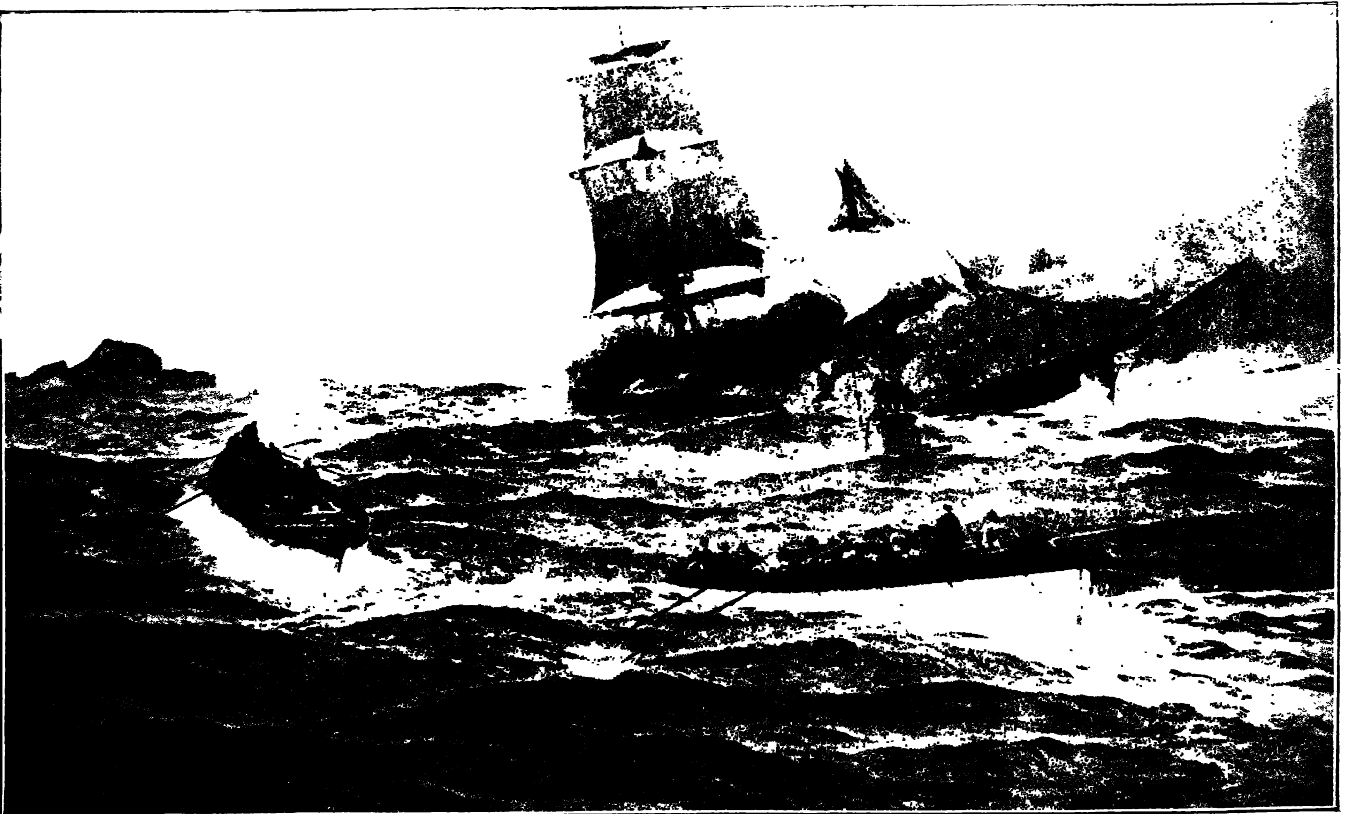
story of his fine courage spread through Italy and France, and he received the Victoria Cross and the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Everyone was terribly shocked when, ten days later, the fine young airman was killed in an accident to his machine while he was merely practising flying in the aerodrome at Versailles.

Paris was bombarded in March 1915, and Calais three times during the spring. The air defences of Paris are very good, and it was thought an attack would not be made there again.

The French airmen did a great deal of good work all through the year. On the 27th of May they dropped eighty-five bombs on the great factory for the manufacture of explosives at Ludwigshafen; and as three great fires broke out as a result, it was thought that a large part of the works must be destroyed. On the 3rd of June French airmen bombarded the headquarters of the Crown Prince of Germany; on the 9th they made an attack on Brussels; and on the 15th they bombarded Karlsruhe, dropping bombs which in this case would probably kill civilians, which as a rule the Allied airmen tried their best not to do. The Germans were very indignant indeed, although Karlsruhe had a garrison of 4000 soldiers; while the Germans had often attacked English towns with no garrison at all. The French made this attack on Karlsruhe deliberately, as a "reprisal," or punishment, for the attacks which Germany had made on undefended towns. The French published a statement showing that "open" or undefended towns in France and England had been bombarded eighty-three times by German aeroplanes and twenty-one times by Zeppelins.

Some people in Great Britain wished that the British airmen would also make reprisals; but most people felt that it was much nobler and wiser not to do so, for two wrongs do not make a right.

In the autumn the raids on England began once more. On the 7th of September three Zeppelins raided the East Coast, and seventeen people were killed and thirty-nine injured. Another raid was made, this time on the centre of London,



A GERMAN SUBMARINE DESTROYING A MERCHANTMAN IN THE BALTIC

the very next night. Twenty people were killed and many injured. Sir Percy Scott, who knows so much about guns, was now put in charge of the air defences of London, and people hoped that the Zeppelin raids were at an end; but on the 13th of October London was startled again at about ten o'clock at night by the sound of the anti-aircraft guns. The Zeppelins had come once more, and the people in the heart of London could see them high up, looking no bigger than large cigars in the sky, and they could hear the hissing of the shells as they whizzed through the air. London kept quite calm, and the Germans must have been very disappointed at the results of their attacks. No important military centre, no railway station or great munition factory was destroyed. Thirty-two people were killed in London and nine outside, while over a hundred people were injured.

The German purpose in making these raids, besides destroying important positions, was to terrify the people; but they did not succeed in this. People were quite cool, and the chief anxiety of many was to get a good look at the Zeppelins. Though no one could pretend to like the raids, their purpose was not fulfilled, and great indignation was aroused in neutral countries.

On the sea, too, Germany continued her attacks on defenceless passenger ships. Her navy, or what remained of it, was shut up in the Kiel Canal. The British battleships had no longer a chance of much fighting, though they kept up their watch by night and day. No German merchantmen were, of course, now on the seas; but the navy had to watch, too, that no contraband of war should be carried to Germany in neutral ships. The "submarine blockade" had, of course, proved a complete failure. The submarines could prowl about under the surface of the ocean and attack defenceless people but they could not drive British trading vessels from the sea, as they had boasted.

In the Baltic, however, both British and Russian submarines did a fair amount of damage to ships of the German fleet. On

the 2nd of July a British submarine sank the German cruiser *Pommern* there, and drove another cruiser, the *Albatross*, which was engaged in laying mines, ashore; and nine German battleships and twelve cruisers were driven off by ships of the Russian navy on the 8th of August, when they made an attack on the coast of the Gulf of Riga, hoping to help forward the German armies advancing towards Riga. On the 18th of August a battle between Russian and German ships in the Gulf ended in a complete victory for the Russians. In October a British submarine sank the large cruiser *Prince Adelbert* near Libau.

The British destroyers did splendid work against the German submarines, though neither side announced the details. The Germans, naturally, were not anxious to make their losses known, and the British thought that silence gave them a better chance of fresh successes. At one time it seemed as though the German submarines had been driven from the sea; but they went on busily building them, and every now and then the world was shocked by the news of a fresh atrocity. In spite of everyone's indignation at the sinking of the *Lusitania* on the 31st of May, the Germans continued to sink vessels belonging to the Allies and even to neutrals. Sometimes they gave warning, but oftener they did not. The White Star liner *Arabic* was sunk without warning on the 19th of August. Fortunately the vessel did not sink for ten minutes, and by the prompt action of the captain and crew the greater number of passengers were saved. On the 4th of September the Allan liner *Hesperian* was torpedoed in the same way. The *Falaba*, the *Ancona*, an Italian emigrant ship, which was sunk probably by an Austrian submarine on the 7th November, and the *Persia*, torpedoed on the 30th December, each with a great number of passengers, must be added to the list. On the sea as in the air the German record is one of mere useless cruelty.

CHAPTER VII

GERMANY AND THE LITTLE NATIONS

THE Great War will always be remembered as the war for the freedom of the "little nations." It will be remembered, too, very bitterly for the terrible suffering it brought to these nations.

Belgium was the first victim of her own courage and German cruelty. The story of how she saved Europe by delaying the German invasion of France in August 1914 has already been told, and the story, too, of the terrible cruelties which the Belgians suffered as the German armies rolled over the land. But after this time of terror and bloodshed there came another and longer time of unhappiness. Belgium was occupied by the Germans, and treated worse than any conquered province by any ordinary conqueror. About one-fifth of the Belgian population had been killed or had fled away; the other four-fifths remained to be bullied by the Germans, who coolly announced that they took no responsibility for feeding the Belgian people, having quite enough to do to feed their own.

Belgium is an industrial nation, and depends very much for food on things which she imports from other countries. There were, of course, no imports now; but the Germans said that this was Great Britain's fault. If she wanted to help the Belgians she could raise the blockade of Antwerp. This, of course, Great Britain could not do, as it would only mean letting things through for the use of the Germans. It seemed that the Belgians would starve, especially as the Germans demanded and took a great deal of money and food from them.

Fortunately, the great neutral country of America took pity on them. A commission was formed for the purpose of sending a sufficient supply of food to the Belgians, and the Germans were required to promise that they would take none of it for their own use. Great Britain, of course, allowed the American ships carrying the food supplies to pass freely. The supply and distribution of the food were organized splendidly. Great Britain had intended to help the Belgians with a regular money payment, but would only do so on condition that Germany did not take from Belgium more than what, according to the law of nations, she was allowed to do—enough to support the army occupying the country. But the Germans were demanding a payment of forty million francs each month from the Belgians, and under the circumstances Great Britain felt that she would be merely paying money to the enemy. But in April 1915 a fund for Belgian relief was begun in England, and soon £500,000 a month was spent on supplies for the suffering people.

The brave old Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, was imprisoned because of a pastoral letter he issued to his people, in which he reminded the Belgians that they owed allegiance only to their own king. So great was the indignation everywhere that the Germans soon set him free, with explanations meant to show that they had never meant to keep him prisoner. The Archbishop had shown himself perfectly calm and fearless in face of an enemy quite capable of shooting him, as, before the end of the year, they shot Edith Cavell, the brave English nurse who had tended German wounded as well as Belgian. Her "crime" was that she had helped Belgian men of military age to escape from Belgium. The Germans determined to make an example of her. She was tried by court-martial and sentenced to death. The sentence was speedily carried out while the American ambassador, who went to plead for her, was being given to understand that his interference might save her. This cruel killing of a woman for an offence like this shocked the whole civilized world. No one

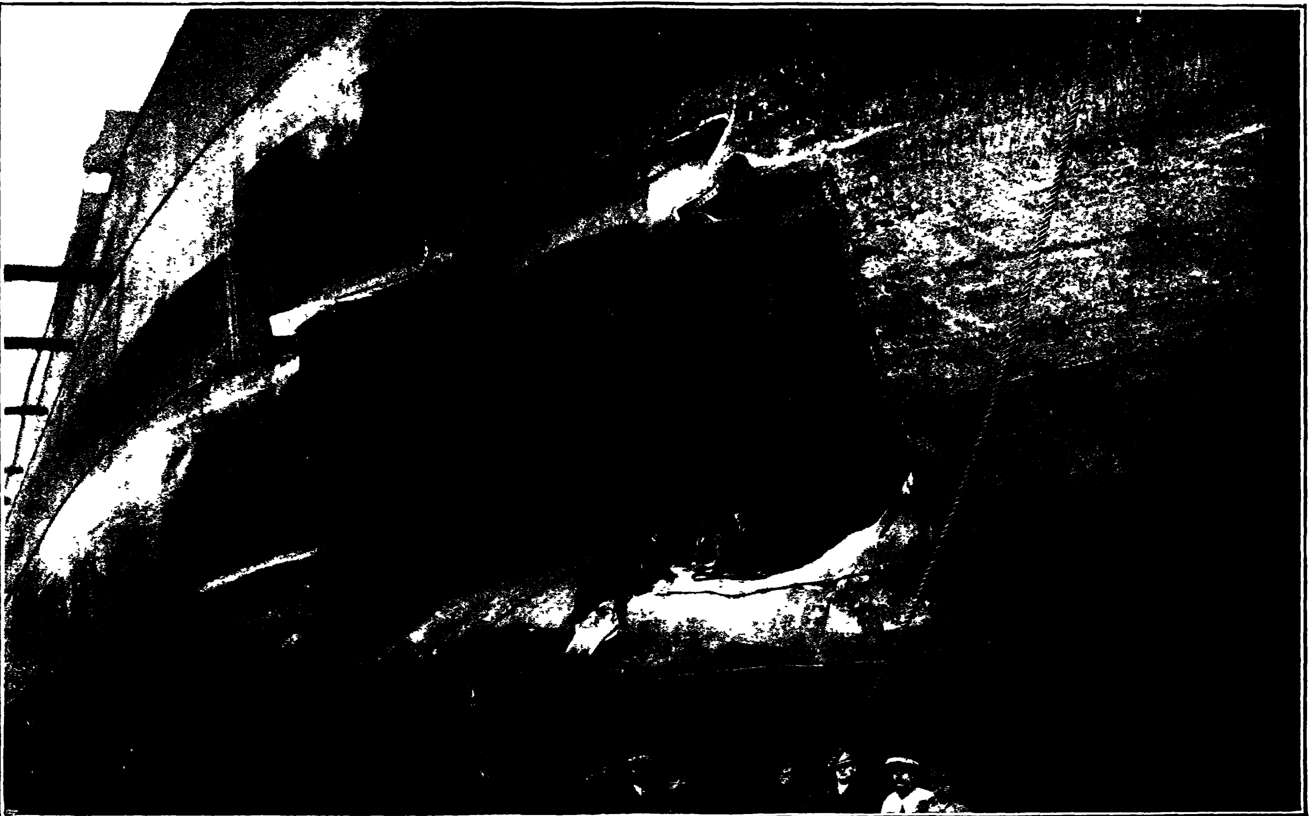


Photo by F. C. Coleman, Newcastle

EFFECT OF A TORPEDO A LARGE CARGO STEAMER BROUGHT SAFELY INTO DOCK

would have believed that even the Germans, with the long tale of cruelty against them, could be guilty of so cold-blooded an act.

Nurse Cavell died for trying to help the cause of Belgian freedom. Meanwhile Belgium, the little nation which had saved Europe, lived the miserable life of the conquered with the conqueror on her soil, and depending for the very existence of its people on the charity of the neutral nations and the Allies.

But the sufferings of Poland were, perhaps, even worse than those of Belgium. It was hoped that this people, who had suffered so much at the hands of the great nations of Central Europe in the past, would at the end of the war become a free and united nation once more; but meanwhile Poland formed the chief battle-ground for the Russian and German armies, and as the fight raged, with the line swaying to and fro across the land, the Polish people were reduced to the utmost misery. The land was one ruin, fields and crops torn up into a mere mass of rubbish, towns destroyed, cattle dead or driven off for the use of the enemy. Some of the larger towns submitted to the Germans, consenting to manufacture supplies for them, in order to save themselves from starvation. Bands of peasants were driven to make roads and lay railways.

But in the winter of 1915 a great number of the Polish peasants were wandering eastwards, trying to find a place of safety from the German armies. Many of these refugees found safety and relief in Petrograd and other great towns; but many others wandered into country districts, which could not give them any help, and from which they turned westwards again, suffering the greatest misery from cold and hunger.

Relief funds were started in Petrograd and in Britain, France, and America; but it was much more difficult to help the Poles than to help the Belgians. The country is larger and wilder, and, of course, not known to Western peoples as Belgium, a favourite holiday place, is. The relief could not reach thousands of the starving Poles. The story of their misery will only be told in full later.

The conquered Serbs, too, suffered intense misery. Those who fled suffered all the horrors of hunger and fatigue; those who remained were tortured in the most horrible ways by the Bulgars, who are little better than savages in their treatment of an enemy. The Montenegrins shared the sufferings of the Serbs, whom they had helped. The Germans seized on the pigs, on which the Serbs greatly depend for their living, and feasted on pork to their hearts' content, besides getting much-needed fat for their high-explosive shells. The Kaiser, realizing that the Serbs would yet be a great danger in the triumphant advance eastward which he hoped his armies would yet make, published a letter inviting them to make peace, and addressing them as "his heroic Serbs." The Serbs were in no humour to be coaxed by such insincerity, and preferred to suffer with the other little nations than to buy relief from the tyrant in this way.

But not only did the little nations of the West suffer so bitterly from the tyranny of Germany. Another nation, one of the oldest civilized and Christian peoples in existence, the Armenians, was almost completely destroyed in terrible massacres by Turkey, the ally of Germany. Germany was the only nation who might have persuaded the Turks to have mercy on the Armenians; but it seems that she never said a word on their behalf. She was anxious to keep the friendship of Turkey, and preferred to let a whole people be destroyed to running the risk of any disagreement with her ally.

The Armenians, being a Christian and foreign people, whose land was conquered long ago by the Turks, were disliked and kept down by the Turkish Government. Thirty years ago, and again in 1908, there had been massacres of the Armenians encouraged by the Turkish Government; but the Turks had been kept from further crimes against this people (who were not allowed to carry weapons, and were, therefore, quite defenceless) by the fear of the other nations of Europe. Now that these nations were quarrelling among themselves, the Turks took the chance of turning against the

Armenians again. There can be no doubt that Germany (whom the Turks had joined because they thought the Germans were the greatest people in Europe, and sure to win) could have persuaded the Turks to spare the Armenians. But she did nothing, and there began a wholesale massacre of the Armenian people—men, women, and children. The men were marched away in crowds and shot or even beaten to death. Men, women, and children were carried out to sea and thrown in to drown. Great numbers of women and children were driven away from their homes, marching day after day to desert places, where they could not possibly live, as there was no food. Thousands died on the way. Young women and children were taken away, and were sold as slaves to Turkish nobles and rich men.

Only here and there, where the Armenians had managed to seize some weapons, little bands resisted, and though they were for the most part overcome, they had at least the satisfaction of dying fighting, and not being driven off like animals to the slaughter. A quarter of a million Armenians escaped, falling back, under the protection of the Russian armies, into the Russian Caucasus, where the Allies and neutral nations sent them food and medicine, for many were terribly ill and tired with the hardships of the retreat. Another 5000 were rescued by a French ship on the coast near Antioch, where they had defended themselves in the hills. All they asked of the Frenchmen was ammunition, as they had run short; but the Frenchmen persuaded them to go with them, and carried them in safety to Port Said. Perhaps altogether one and a half million Armenians remained to build up again, it may be hoped, a new nation on the ruins of the old. Germany must take part of the blame for this terrible wrong done to another little nation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ROAD TO BAGHDAD

At the end of 1915 Germany had faced the Allies on many fronts without coming any nearer to victory. The conquest of Servia was a triumph ; but people naturally wondered what part it took in the general German plan. Many thought that the Germans wanted to make their way easier for a big attack on the British in the East some time in 1916. The Turks were hoping that the Germans would help them in a new attack on Egypt ; but many people thought that the Germans would take no notice of their wishes, but would send out large reinforcements to attack the British in Mesopotamia, where a victory might give Germany some power in the Persian Gulf. She had tried very hard in the past to get power there, hoping from this base to win great influence, and to rival Great Britain in the East.

Meanwhile the British campaign against the Turks in Mesopotamia had been very successful. In the winter of 1914 and in the following spring, as we have seen, the British had taken possession of the whole district forming the delta of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and had beaten off determined attacks by large numbers of Turkish troops. The plan of the British was to advance upon the famous old city of Baghdad, on the Tigris, a city where the Germans would dearly love to have power, for it is a great Turkish centre. (The Germans had, indeed, made themselves friends of the Turks, partly by planning and paying for the great railway from Constantinople to Baghdad, which is, of course, not yet finished.) If Baghdad is to fall into the hands of any European nation, it

must be into those of Great Britain. Now that Germany has shown the extent of her ambitions, she cannot be allowed to control a railway which would represent the shortest route to India. The present route to India is by sea, through the Suez Canal and the Red Sea. By the land route the journey could be made in about half the time it takes by sea. If the Germans got control of this railway, they would threaten the sea route on the flank, and there can be no doubt that they would try to undermine Britain's power in India. These are the reasons why Britain is anxious that her troops in Mesopotamia should advance to Baghdad. It is a strange and romantic thing that the modern nations should be fighting out their battles on this far-off battle-ground, the scene of so much wonderful history in the far past.

After the defeat of the Turks at Kurna the British pressed forward along the Tigris to Kut-el-Amara, where the Turks were splendidly entrenched, and expected to be able to ward off attacks for a long time. But the British took possession on the 28th of September, and pressed forward towards Baghdad. In this last stage of the journey, however, the men had to face far greater numbers of Turks than they had expected; and though greatly outnumbered they had won the Battle of Ctesiphon on the 22nd of November, they had lost so many men that, with the army of the enemy increasing in front of them, it was thought wiser to fall back on Kut. Here, in December, they strengthened still more the trenches and defences already made strong by the Turks, and waited for reinforcements to enable them to continue their advance. But before reinforcements came the Turks closed in on Kut, taking up along the Tigris positions from which they could attack new forces advancing north to Kut.

Great anxiety was felt for General Townshend and his little force shut up in Kut. Troops were sent to their relief under General Aylmer, who came up with the Turks, and attacked them on the 21st of January; but the ground was so soft and marshy that he could not break his way through,

though it was clear that he had every hope of succeeding soon. There was no question of the relieving force helping the troops in Kut to retire. The British troops were, on the contrary, going to press on once more on the road to Baghdad.

The British advance on Baghdad is useful too, because just to the north of it lies the Turkish Caucasus, and troops were withdrawn from there to advance against the British. This relieved the Russians, who at the beginning of February 1916 were pressing on very rapidly on this front. They had practically surrounded the great fortress of Erzerum, and though Turkish troops were being hurried up to save it, the great fortress fell on the 16th. The fall of Erzerum was a great triumph for the Russians.

The taking of Baghdad would be an immense advantage, too, in making the Eastern countries realize the power of Great Britain. Before and during the war Germany had done her best to persuade the Eastern peoples that she was much more powerful than Great Britain. The Turks, at least, believed it, which was one reason for their joining the Germans as allies. The harm already done was shown when the "gendarmerie" in Persia declared themselves on the side of the Germans, and imprisoned British officials. The "gendarmerie" is a force of armed men raised by all the countries to keep peace in Persia. Encouraged by the Germans, they seized Kûm and Hamadan for them. The Shah, as the ruler of Persia is called, was at Teheran, and gave his friendship to the Russians.

The Russians invaded Persia, took Kangavar, and drove back the Turkish troops forty miles to the south of Hamadan.

The campaign in Mesopotamia was the only one in which things went well all the time for the British. No mistakes were made. The fighting was of the kind to which British officers and soldiers had been used in earlier wars. If a sufficient number of troops could be spared for the expedition from the other fronts, it seemed at the beginning of 1916 that there might soon be a big success at Baghdad.

CHAPTER IX

THE FORTUNES OF WAR

At the beginning of 1916 one question was being asked by people everywhere: "When will the war be over?" No one could answer it. There were signs that another great offensive was being prepared on the Western front, and at the beginning of February the welcome announcement was made that Russia had now at last, after a hard winter's work, all the munitions she needed. She would now be able to push forward once more from the line to which she had fallen back after the fall of Vilna. No one could foresee what might be the result if a successful offensive were made on the West while the Russians advanced once more from the East.

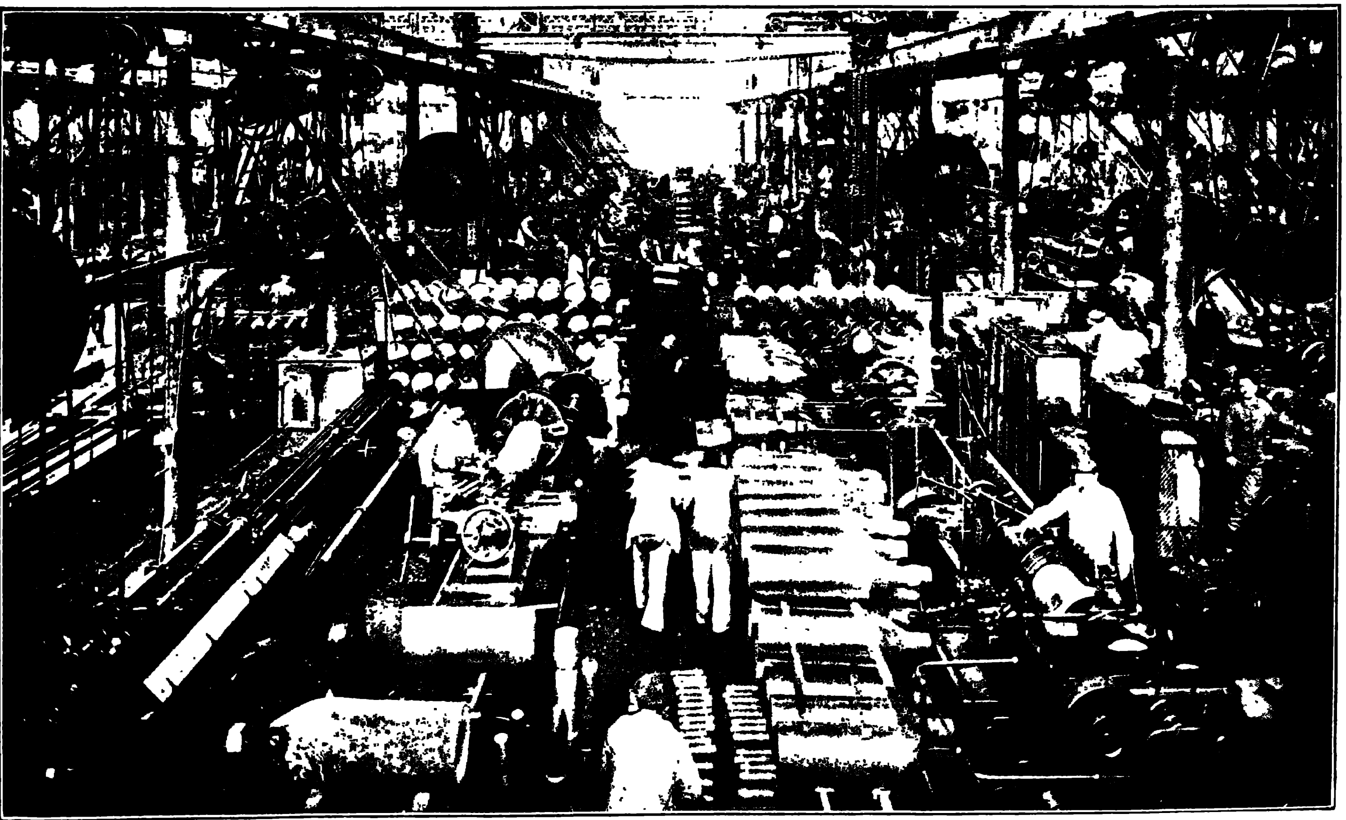
But in any case it had been understood by thoughtful people for a long time now that the war was a "war of attrition"—that victory would be at last with the side which could hold out longest because it had the greater supply of men and money. The Germans realized before the war had gone on for four months, after their failure to take Paris or the Channel ports, that the war must be, not the quick struggle with brilliant success for themselves for which they had at first hoped, but a slow war of attrition.

They still hoped to win, and began to pile up munitions as fast as in the years before the war they had tried to make soldiers. They knew that the best way to save their men was to make munitions. With many guns a few men could hold positions where many men would be required otherwise. It was through this policy of the Germans that the war came to

be so much a struggle of artillery. Before long France and Britain began to pile up munitions too, and the Germans weakened themselves by their wasteful method of attack, in which they must have lost nearly as many men as they saved by their free use of ammunition. On the Russian front especially they wasted great numbers in their desperate attempts to break the Russian line. We have seen that the Russian retreat was so finely carried out that the enemy lost at least as many men as the Russians. And they had very much fewer men to fall back on.

But the worst foe Germany had was Great Britain. She was the wealthiest of the Allied Powers, and not only had she more money, but by this time she had more men than any of the Powers engaged in the war, except Russia. France had naturally lost great numbers, though the French generals knew how to use their men without wasting them. The Allies now looked to Great Britain for men as well as money. Great Britain gave both.

As we have seen, the British army was not large at the beginning of the war, for Great Britain has always depended chiefly on her navy for home defence. The army was, however, splendid in quality, and won praise everywhere for its heroic fighting in the Great Retreat. But when the war began the young men of England came forward in thousands to join the army. In a few months, sad to say, there were very few men of the original army left; but recruits had come in in great numbers, and, after some months of training, were sent out to the front, where the forces rapidly increased, and the line held by the British was lengthened out, setting free French troops to reinforce the line farther south. Still there were many people who said that Great Britain ought to have some method of conscription, or "national service." They declared that if Britain had had this system earlier the war would never have taken place, as Germany would not have dared to run the risk of having to fight it together with the armies of the other Allied Powers. This, of course, was only



MAKING SHELLS IN A LARGE FRENCH MUNITION WORKS

a guess; and there were other people who were very much against the idea of conscription, and especially against the plan to begin such a system during the war. Altogether, in a few months Great Britain had put as large an army into the field in proportion to her population as any of the conscript nations had done. Still, there were some people who talked bitterly against the "slacker," maintaining that there were many young men strong enough and with no one depending upon them holding back from the army.

In June 1915 a Bill was passed in Parliament declaring that there should be a National Register of every one in Great Britain between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five. This, at any rate, would make clear to the Government what people were available for work which would be helpful in the war. Great Britain was now doing in haste the work of organization which Germany had been doing quietly for years before the war.

Before long another step was taken in the direction of conscription. Lord Derby had been given the charge of the recruiting work in Great Britain. He devised a scheme by which the men of England of military age who had not yet enlisted should come forward and "attest"—that is, offer themselves to come up for military service if required. The men were divided into groups according to age, and it was understood that the groups would be called up in turn, so that the older men would be left until the younger had been called up. It was also understood that married men would not be called up if any large number of single men were holding back. The Derby scheme was a step going a long way in the direction of conscription. By January 1916 all the groups containing single men up to the age of thirty had been called up.

Some people were against conscription because they thought that recruiting was going on well enough without it, and the taking away of so many men was bad for trade at home. Britain was finding great sums of money for the Allies, and it was

thought that this was really the best part she could play in the war. If she sent too many men trade would suffer, and she would not have so much money to pay out. It is true that in Great Britain, as in France and Germany, women were doing work which had always been done by men before the war. Women were driving and conducting trams and buses, delivering letters, collecting tickets, carrying round milk, working on farms, and doing a hundred other kinds of what had come to be looked on as men's work. Still there were complaints on every side of the shortage of labour.

The Government had also devised a scheme by which it could have the control of all the factories and workshops in which munitions—that is, articles for use in the war—were being made. The "Munitions Act," passed in July 1915, gave the Government great new powers over the men and women engaged in the manufacture of munitions; and other Acts were passed which gave the Government new powers over all trades and industry. For the future during the war workmen might not fight their own battles by going out "on strike" till the employers gave them what the men thought was just. Neither could the employers "lock" the men "out." The rules of the "Trades Unions," those societies in which the working men of Great Britain have banded themselves since the beginning of the nineteenth century, and which have done so much to defend the working men against greedy or unjust employers, were to be "suspended"—that is, given up—until the end of the war. The Government could punish by fines offences against the Munitions Act, the amount of the fine to be deducted from the wages of the offender.

Mr. Lloyd-George, who was Minister of Munitions, had declared that the trench lines were not only in France and Gallipoli, but in every factory and workshop, and every town and village in Britain. This was true, and it was certainly the duty of every workman or workwoman to do his or her best for the country's cause. But there were people who felt that it was a dangerous thing to give the State so much power

over the working men. It was against the great tradition of liberty that Great Britain had built up. Some even thought that rich employers of labour in Parliament were trying to get these laws passed so that the employers would have greater power than ever over their workmen when the war should be over. In any case the system of conscription, which had now been practically adopted, and the interference of the Government in industry, meant great changes in England. However, it was carefully stated that the suspension of the rules of the Trades Unions was for the period of the war only.

It was feared by many people that there would be a great period of distress after the war. Many men would find themselves out of employment. Prices which had already risen would rise still more. The great expenditure which the war had brought would have to be made up for. There were others who thought that the future would not be so hard after all, although there would not be the prosperity there would have been if the war had never come. In any case, the working men of Britain, and those who were interested in their welfare and progress, were anxious that they should not be put to a greater disadvantage than was necessary when the hard times came. They were quite right and prudent, and it can never be said that the British people had not made every sacrifice for the cause of the Allies and the triumph of right.

If prices had risen in Great Britain and France, they had risen much higher in Germany. People in England could still discuss lightly whether, as butter was so dear, it was worth while to economize and use margarine instead. In Germany they were glad of margarine, for there was a terrible scarcity of fat so much used in German cookery. Their bread, too, was dear and very bad, and food altogether was very scarce. The German people, apart from the loss of their men, were suffering much greater hardships from the war than Great Britain or even France.

The reason for this was the blockade, by which the British navy was able to keep munitions of war and other things out

of Germany. The British navy kept Germany poor, and was, after all, the most powerful factor of all in lessening Germany's supplies. Even if it could not win any great victories on the high seas for the want of German ships to fight it, it could still fight in the war of attrition by keeping supplies out of Germany.

Germany was made to feel the great power of Britain elsewhere too. By the end of February 1916 the British had completed the conquest of the German West African colony called the Cameroons. This left only the colony of German East Africa still in the hands of the enemy, who was thus fast losing the "place in the sun" she desired so much. The command of the campaign in German East Africa was given to General Smuts, who was one of Britain's bravest enemies in the Boer War, and is now a loyal subject of the British Empire.

After eighteen months of war it seemed that the end was surely in sight of the greatest struggle Europe has ever seen.